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# THE PROGRESS OF DRAMA THROUGH THE CENTURIES

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY
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TORONTO

# The Progress of Drama Through the Centuries

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CALEDONIA BRANCH

*"Quicquid praecipies, esto brevis; ut cito dicta*
*Percipiant animi dociles, teneantque fideles."*
*Horace: De Arte Poetica*

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cop. 3

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# PREFACE

This book aims to present a simple and concise statement of the facts in the evelopment of the drama which have already been established by the exhaustive esearches of special authorities and scholars, together with the texts of plays representative of that development from Sophocles through the nineteenth century. t may be objected that this has been done before: but so far as the present ompiler has been able to discover, no one volume offers both a history of the rama and an extensive group of plays. Numerous collections have been published; ut they are confined to one era, to one country, or to one type; and most of them ould entail mature research on the part of the reader, since little or no explanatory aterial is included. Those which are satisfactory in other respects unfortunately ontain plays that are not suitable for reading in mixed classes.

The plays in this volume have been chosen with the younger reader in mind. any dramas which are ranked as masterpieces by adult judgment, are over the eads of young students. Experience has proved that those plays appeal which are ntirely comprehensible to them, or which set forth some high ideal of conduct. Plays bearing upon sex questions, for example, they usually find either distasteful r puzzling. It was necessary to cut *The Silent Woman* and *Dr. Faustus* in order to dapt them for class reading.

In this collection some of the great dramatists, such as Aeschylus, Aristophanes, nd Goethe, are not represented. This is partly because it has been necessary to keep he volume within bounds; and partly because, in some cases, at least, these authors o not appeal so strongly as do their contemporaries. The choice has been further estricted by the availability of texts and translations. The eighteen plays included ere selected as representative not only of the author and period, but also of a ariety of types, ranging through the several forms of tragedy, comedy, and erious drama, to melodrama and farce.

Collateral readings and lists of topics for further investigation will make the ook serve as elastic a purpose as the instructor—or reader—may wish. Since these ists draw largely upon contemporary drama for comparison, they project the eading into the twentieth century. Doubtless no one reader would cover all of he supplementary work. It is meant to be suggestive only.

Although the book is especially planned for class use, it should prove valuable o the general reader, or to dramatic clubs, as well. It should be a useful addition o any library.

It is true that the history of the drama is still being taught in many schools and olleges as merely an incidental part of the course in literature; but there is an ver-growing demand for classes in the literary as well as the laboratory side of the rama. Amateur dramatics and Little Theatres have aroused in many young people critical appreciation of the entertainment to be derived from good plays, and a esire for intelligent understanding of the dramatic tradition.

With profound belief in the intellectual and ethical power of the theatre, the editor places this book in the hands of those readers on whose judgments, tastes, and ideals will depend the fate of the drama within the coming years.

Ruth M. Stauffer

WASHINGTON, D. C.
JANUARY 31, 1927.

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R. M. S.

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# THE PROGRESS OF DRAMA THROUGH THE CENTURIES

It must be remembered, a play is to be seen, and is made to be represented with the advantage of action, nor can appear but with half the spirit without it. For the greatest effect of a play in reading is to excite the reader to go to see it; and when he does so, it is then a play has the effect of example and precept.

From Steele's *Preface* to *The Conscious Lovers*

# THE PROGRESS OF DRAMA THROUGH THE CENTURIES

## INTRODUCTION

In practically every country of the world drama has originated in religious worship. Primitive drama arose from dances which acted out with the whole body the emotions and episodes of racial religion. Even the independent development of the drama in the Middle Ages began in the ritual of the high festivals of the church.

*Drama* comes from the Greek word meaning *action* (Gr. *drân, to do* or *act*). Drama, therefore, imitates through action—usually accompanied by speech—the persons and events of life, so represented as to stir the emotions of the spectators. These persons and events may be realistic or wholly fanciful; but, in any case, the story is actually performed before the eyes of the spectator. Drama is mimetic, not narrative. The personality of the author drops out of sight. Plays are meant to be acted. All dramatists must bear in mind the audience which they are addressing, the stage on which the play is to be given, and the actors who are to represent it.

The action of a play may be either external or internal, that is, either physical or psychical, or both. When the action takes place within the souls of the people of the play,—when the events are shaped by or in turn influence, the *will* of the characters,—we have great drama, such as tragedy or high comedy. When, on the other hand, the action is external so that the characters of the play are the puppets of circumstance, we have lesser drama. In the latter case, when the events are improbable or only accidental, or when the character drawing is exaggerated, we have melodrama or farce.

The essential dramatic element is action, either physical or mental, usually a *struggle* between *opposing forces*. The central character contends against circumstances, or against law and convention, or against fate, or against other human wills. The struggle may be a spiritual one between the better and the weaker sides of his own nature.

The idea illustrated by the struggle is the *theme*, and this gives unity to the action; for nothing should be admitted to the *fable* (or story) of the play which does not bear upon this theme. The events which tell the story are linked through cause and effect (in a *plot*, in other words) to bring about the *climax*, which is the supreme test of the hero's will, and the inevitable consequence of his own decisions and deeds.

The time and place of the action together with the social, political, or racial conditions under which it occurs, form the *setting*. The setting usually has an important bearing on the plot or theme.

Drama demands the utmost condensation and selection; for nothing but decisive moments in the plot must be presented, since the whole sequence of events can be given only through dialogue and action suitable to the narrow confines of a stage. In a brief space of time,—at the most, three hours,—the whole story must be enacted with such economy and poignancy as to focus the attention of the heterogeneous group of people who form the audience. The great dramatist, therefore, must be not only a clever playwright with a sure sense of character and plot, but most of all a stylist who can say well what is worth saying.

There are two main types of drama: *tragedy* and *comedy.* The latter is less serious; it appeals, not to our emotions, but to our intellectual perception of the absurd incongruities or amusing disappointments of life. The outcome of a comedy is happy and leaves the spectator with a pleasant sense of satisfaction. It may have for its object the revelation of the frailties of human character; this is serious comedy, and is often satirical. Or it may be merely an entertaining complication of events, the entangling and resolution of which engage our interest; this is light comedy or even farce.

Tragedy, on the other hand, leaves the spectator saddened and thoughtful, for it ends in failure,—the failure of the tragic hero to conquer the forces opposing him. It may, indeed, be a glorious failure, a spiritual triumph. The end need not necessarily be death, though in the older forms of tragedy death was felt to be the only fitting conclusion. Living on with failure is more often the fate of the modern tragic hero.

The oldest and most famous definition of tragedy is that of **Aristotle** (384–322 B.C.), the "lawgiver" of dramatic criticism: "*Tragedy is an imitation of an action that is serious, complete, and of a certain magnitude; in language embellished with each kind of artistic ornament, the several kinds being found in separate parts of the play; in the form of action, not narrative; through pity and fear effecting the proper katharsis or purgation of these emotions.*"[1] In contemplating the suffering of another human being we forget our own pettier troubles and realize the profundity of life.

These two chief types of drama, then, are determined not by the end of the play, but by the treatment and by the effect produced on the spectators. The kinds of drama may be pure; or they may be intermingled so that we get *tragi-comedy, heroic comedy, romantic comedy, serious drama* such as the *social problem play,* and other mixed forms.

The plot of a serious play is unfolded in definite stages which may or may not correspond to the mechanical divisions of Acts and Scenes. The play begins with an *exposition* of the time, place, and opening situation of the plot, and makes clear to the audience without loss of time who the characters are and what the general tone or mood of the play is to be. Although its purpose is explanatory, this introduction should not be narrative but should be part of the action itself. The *rising* or *ascending action* begins with the *inciting moment;* that is, the point when the hero or the force opposed to him takes the first step to start the action from the passive situation revealed in the introduction. The *rising action,* which is frequently the larger portion of the play, is the steady growth of the complication of plot events through cause and effect to the *crisis* or *turning point.* This marks the height of the hero's success, or the culminating point of the opposition. At this moment the *reversal* begins, and the *falling* or *descending action* is initiated. The complications are now being unraveled, and the conclusion is foreseen. In order to sustain suspense to the end the dramatist may introduce a *return* or *moment of final suspense* in which it seems as if the fortune of the hero must take a turn for the better or worse, and the impending outcome be prevented. But this is only a momentary check, and the action sweeps onward to the *climax.* In a tragedy this climax is called the *catastrophe* or downfall of the hero. Often, but not necessarily, it means death, as that is the end of all mortal endeavor. In comedy the climax is called the *dénouement* or final untying of the knotted threads of the complication of the plot. In either case it should seem the inevitable consequence of all that has gone before. The *conclusion,* if added, must be brief, and must restore a passive condition of affairs.

In modern dramaturgy (the art of writing plays) the play may begin at the *crisis,* and all preceding action be explained little by little in the course of the play. The aim of the dramatist is to reveal effects rather than causes: the consequences of an act or decision that took place before the action of the play proper begins, form the basis of the plot. This is the classical Greek method: a Greek tragedy begins at what would be the impending *climax* of a modern play. This leads to a fine simplicity and condensation.

---

[1] Butcher's Translation of Aristotle's *Poetics.*

Since **Henrik Ibsen** (1828–1906) in the last quarter of the nineteenth century produced his prose social plays, a marked change has come over all modern drama. The subject matter is taken from contemporary life, the object being more or less didactic:—to arouse human society to a responsibility for needed reforms in our own day and age. Scientific desire for truth leads to searching studies of men and women attacked on all sides by the grim forces of Heredity and Environment. The reactions of the individual in all walks of life are remorselessly revealed, and the result, it is hoped, will prove educational. Thus drama is given a definite ethical purpose.

In modern drama the emphasis usually falls upon character rather than upon plot. The result may be the "static" type of play in which there is no definite plot with a beginning, a middle, and an end. Instead, the dramatist aims to present a certain phase of life at a moment of crisis, and to study its effects upon the characters involved. The hero need not be a strong but imperfect character of high rank, as in the older type of drama: he is a commonplace person; he may even be a weakling. "Poetic justice" does not reign supreme. There is no sense of finality in the ending of the play. When the curtain falls, the audience is left to imagine and to reflect upon what is still to happen to the characters. The dramatist may go so far as to leave the solution hopeless. His whole object is to make the play as real as life itself.

To be sure, plays of entertainment, pure and simple, full of surprising plot complications and fascinating suspense, still persist. And more and more in the twentieth century a reaction against the stark realism of the "play with a purpose" is apparent in the renascence of the imaginative drama in all its phases from mere fancy to pure idealism. Furthermore, satire is again coming into its own.

A change has also taken place in dramatic technique. Many of the time-honored devices of the theatre have fallen into disrepute. Coincidences must not assist a plot: the theatric conveniences of confidants, of eavesdropping, of disguise, of letters read aloud, are things of the past. Asides, except such ejaculations as might normally be let fall in real life, are taboo. The soliloquy is defunct, but there is agitation for its revival on the grounds of practical expediency and economy of time. There must be nothing extravagant in language or action; nothing extraneous to the speech of the play, such as long passages of description or declamation. The dialogue is broken, as in real life; there are few sustained discourses or well-rounded periods. As this newer type of drama appeals more strongly to the intellect than to the emotions, it is accordingly written in prose rather than in poetry.

Modern acting aims to reproduce the effect of reality in restraint of gesture and naturalness of voice. The author furnishes suggestions to the actors in more or less elaborate stage directions, which sometimes analyze the characters in psychological and physical detail, much as in a novel.

Electricity, however, has wrought the most sweeping changes. Not only has it made possible more subtle interpretation of character because of perfect illumination of facial expressions, but it has revolutionized the art of stagecraft. Nowadays settings are used to express the mood of the play. The effect produced lies in harmony and in the beauty of suggestion rather than in photographic accuracy of detail. From the painted improbabilities of "sets" and "wings" that captivated the audiences from the days of Italian Opera through the time of Sir Henry Irving, the pendulum is swinging back to a glorification of the simplicity of Shakespeare's stage.

## TOPICS

Contrast of the Novel with the Drama
Comparison of a Dramatization of a Novel with the Novel Itself
Setting in the Present Day
    Realism in Modern Stage Settings
    The Influence of David Belasco on Modern Settings
    Symbolism in Modern Settings
    The Pictorial Element in Modern Stage *Décor*
    Use of Color and Line to Produce Mood in the Modern Theatre
    Use of Curtains and Hangings in Modern Settings
    Experiments with Light
    Modern Skeleton Settings
The Modernists: Gordon Craig, Granville Barker, Max Reinhardt, Norman Wilkinson, Robert Edmond Jones, Norman Bel-Geddes, Lee Simonson, Sam Hume, Morris Gest, Joseph Urban.
Changes in the Stage Itself: The Revolving Stage; the Swinging Stage; the Sliding and Sinking Stage; the Cycloramic Curtain; the Plaster Dome; Adaptations of Old Forms; Devices for Shifting Scenes
The New Lighting
Modern Costuming
Modern Theatre Architecture
The Intimate Theatre
The Influence of the Movies on the Twentieth-Century Theatre
Melodrama in the Moving Pictures
Farce in the Moving Pictures: The So-called "Comedy"
Modern Treatment of the Unity of Time
Modern Treatment of the Unity of Place
The Fourth Unity: Unity of Mood
Stage Directions in Modern Plays: The Influence of the Novel
Use of Asides and Soliloquies Today
Speech on the Stage Today
The Repertory Theatre *versus* the Commercialized Theatre
The Theatre Guild of New York
The Actors' Theatre
Little Theatres in the United States
Professor George P. Baker's "47 Workshop" at Harvard and His New Theatre Course at Yale
The Subsidized Theatre of Europe
The Moscow Art Theatre
The Great Arena Theatre in Berlin (Das Grosse Schauspielhaus)
The People's Free Theatres in Germany (Freie Volksbühne)
The Free Theatre of France (Théâtre Libre)
The Comédie Française
The Mechanisms of Drury Lane Theatre in London
The "Old Vic" in London

# GREEK DRAMA

To understand the development of modern drama we must go back more than twenty-five hundred years to Greece.

From the religious dances that interpreted the ritual of the worship of Dionysus (*Roman* Bacchus), the god of fertility and the rebirth of the seasons, there developed through the shadowy centuries of prehistoric Greece the art of dramatic creation. The drama was always connected with the religion of the Greek nation. In primitive Greece the worship of the gods, especially of Dionysus, was celebrated in the public orchestra (Gr. *orchéstra, a dancing-place*) by formal dances (Gr. *chorós, a band of dancers*), which were statuesque in pose and rhythmically expressive of all emotion. Later these *choruses* were accompanied by interpretative songs called *dithyrambs*, sung by a band of trained dancers, led by a flute-player. The dithyrambs celebrated the changes of the seasons, especially the joyful coming of spring and the reawakening of life, and were given at the festival of the *Greater Dionysia* in March.

A mythical **Arion** was supposed to be the first *coryphaeus* (leader of the chorus) to arrange these improvised songs in balanced lyrics, which were sung responsively by the two equal divisions of the chorus. These parts of the *ode* (song) were called *strophe* and *antistrophe* (literally, the turning of the chorus in the dance from east to west, and the exactly corresponding movement from west to east). Arion is also credited with dressing the chorus as satyrs in goat skins to impersonate the revellers of Dionysus. Thus he is supposed to have originated the "goat-song" or *tragedy* (Gr. *tragodía*) although the derivation of the word is still in dispute.

Tradition says that **Thespis,** who won the prize for tragedy in the *Attic Dionysia* in 534 B.C., was the first to introduce an actor (Gr. *hypocritês, one who answers*), who answered the leader of the chorus in the episodes or pauses between dances; and so a rude dialogue was established. Thus the first real dramatist **Aeschylus** (525–456 B.C.) found the elements of drama ready to his hand. By adding a second actor Aeschylus made the dialogue more important than the chorus, and drama as we now use the term was created.

## GREEK TRAGEDY

Greek tragedy, as we have seen, was at first wholly lyrical; but the chorus tends to lose its importance in the history of Greek drama. At first it was an integral part of the play. But later it became merely interludes between the episodes of the plot: it functioned as the *entr'acte* music of today. Finally it disappeared entirely. Originally the chorus consisted of fifteen men: (no women ever ~~appeared~~ on ~~the~~ ~~Greek~~ stage). But Aeschylus modified the number to twelve, and his successors, **Sophocles** and **Euripides**, used fifteen. In comedy the number was twenty-four.

The chorus of a Greek play is made up, usually, of "background" characters, such as old men, attendant maidens, bystanders; and it may be either friendly or hostile to the chief character. The choral odes had to be written and the dancer trained by the dramatist. The dances with the accompanying gestures and postures of the body were formal, and the movements of the chorus almost military in their precision. The songs were arranged in alternate stanzas,— strophes and antistrophes — sung to a lyre or flute in which the dance, the gestures, and the music had to correspond exactly. Sometimes parts of the chorus were assigned to individuals or groups, and sung in a kind of lyrical dialogue.

The chorus entered in march time in three files of five each, with the coryphaeus in the center of the first row. They kept this formation as they sang the strophes of the *parode* (opening chorus), marching towards the altar of Dionysus in the center of the orchestra; then wheeled and sang the antistrophe of the same song as they marched in the other direction. The chorus halted in files and faced front while another song called the *epode* was sung. During the *episodes* (dialogues) the chorus was drawn up in two lines between the altar and the stage at the back of the orchestra. The chorus did not go up on the stage.

The choral odes may be narrative, or explanatory of the action, or they may be pure lyrics, such as prayers, hymns, patriotic songs, nature songs, or emotional outbursts. The chorus is philosophical and detached, representing the impersonal and reflective point of view, and practically never takes an active part in the plot.

A Greek play opens with an expository dialogue, or with a monologue followed by a brief dialogue. Then the chorus enters, and, singing the parode, takes its position in the orchestra. (In two plays of Aeschylus and in one of Euripides the chorus enters first.) By this time the audience is informed of the situation on which the action depends, and the drama proceeds. As not more than three actors and the leader of the chorus take part in the dialogue at the same time, the dialogue is somewhat stilted, and consists of set speeches rather than of the flexible give and take of modern stage conversation. The arrangement of dialogue in alternating lines (*stichomythia*) was a formal device used especially in arguments. Since some of these speeches were sung either as solos or in lyrical dialogue with the chorus, the actors had to be trained singers, like our grand opera stars.

The chief actors in a Greek tragedy were paid by the state. Three were allotted to each dramatist. These actors were called the *protagonist* (first actor), who played the leading part, the "star" rôle, and frequently also recited the messenger's speech; the *deuteragonist* (second actor or *antagonist*), who played the second lead and also one or more of the minor parts, such as friend or retainer to the principal character; and the *tritagonist* (third actor), who played character parts and minor rôles of strangers or enemies. All of the characters in the play had to be divided among these three actors. Sometimes a "mute" would take the rôle that one of the other actors had just been playing if it were necessary for the character to be present though silent, in order that the first actor might play still another speaking part. The number of mutes was unlimited, as was also the number of supernumeraries, so that the stage could be thronged with warriors, attendants, citizens, sailors, maidens, etc., provided that they had no lines.

These shifts from one character to another were not so difficult on the Greek stage because the actors,— and the chorus — wore masks suitable to the character portrayed. These were hollow heads, larger than life-size, representing, presumably, all ages of both sexes, all classes, all degrees of beauty and of intelligence, and a wide variety of human expressions, ranging from composure, and pride, through grief and horror. Since the masks prevented any play in facial expression, the actor had to rely upon the dramatic power of his voice. The resonance was increased by some kind of mechanical device in the mask itself. In tragedy the actors wore high-soled shoes (the *cothurnus*), and were padded in proportion to make them appear more than human. The costumes were stereotyped, and gorgeous in color and design. In comedy flat-heeled shoes were used, the costumes were bizarre but not padded, and masks, often fantastic or caricatured, were worn.

Greek plays were presented as part of the national religion and of the cultural education of the people. The performances were held especially in connection with the Greek festival of Dionysus in March, called the Greater Dionysia. They began at sunrise and lasted throughout the day. Since the presentation was under control of the state, public-spirited men paid the expenses of the production. There was no return in the investment through the box-office receipts, for the citizens were admitted free. The occasion was a competition among three poets who were chosen a year beforehand. Each poet had not only to write, but also to direct and present four plays,— three tragedies and an after-piece of a comic nature, called a "satyr play." Since the dramatist had to compose the dialogue, the lyrics, the music, the dances, had to train the performers and stage the play, and had frequently to act in it himself, he was well called poet (Greek for *creator*). As there were three awards, and no one, according to the superstitious Greeks, must lose, for Victory (Níke) only must be present, there were three poets chosen. The reward was an ivy crown.

Greek theatres (Gr. *théatron, a place for seeing*) were built out-of-doors in semicircular shape, with seats enough to accommodate the entire population of a city. The theatre looked like a wide-brimmed shallow bowl, for the seats were built in tiers on the slope of a hillside. At the bottom of the bowl was the orchestra, or place for dancing. This was the large circular space between the tiers of seats and the stage buildings. The orchestra was separated from the seats by a paved gutter; and in the center stood an altar to Dionysus (Gr., *thyméle, altar*), which could be used in the action of the play. Behind the orchestra, usually intersecting the circle of the orchestra like a chord, were the stage buildings, which had developed out of the tent (Gr. *skené, scene*), that had originally been used merely as a dressing room for the actors. This *scene*, or tent, had become gradually transformed into a low building with a columned façade, in the center of which double doors opened outward. This façade, which was called the proscenium (Gr. *proskénion*), was probably two stories high. There was usually a projecting wing at each side. Modern scholars hold that there was no stage in the theatre of the Fifth Century, B.C., and that it was not until later that a narrow stage was erected in front of the proscenium.[1] Such a stage could be connected with the orchestra, when necessary, by movable wooden steps. The flat roof of the *scene* could be utilized in staging the play. Here, for example, gods could appear or could be swung out into mid-air in a chariot or similar device by means of a crane (Gr. *mechané*). Hence arose the expression *deus ex machina*, "the god from the machine."

The rare changes of scene were accomplished by the use of revolving prisms, called *periaktoi*, at the side of the stage; or, more frequently, by the use of the *eccyclema* (Gr. *ekkúklema*). This was a low platform which was rolled out onto the stage as the double doors in the proscenium were thrown open. This latter contrivance was employed to show action that had taken place within, and therefore, out of sight,—though not necessarily out of hearing—of the audience. The flinging open of the doors and the rolling out of the eccyclema, on which were posed the actors, furnished a dramatic climax in the action.

Violent action, such as murder or death, was almost never permitted to occur on the stage. Murders took place within, and the audience heard the cries of the victim; or they were committed at a distance, and the story of the events was told in intensely vivid narrative by a messenger. After this messenger's speech, which became a definite dramatic convention in all Greek tragedies, the corpse was brought in on a bier by attendants; or suddenly revealed on the eccyclema; and the effect was even more moving than the actual death on the stage itself.

The story or fable on which a Greek drama was built was already familiar to the audience; for the poet was restricted in his subjects to the myths and legends of gods and demigods, and of the heroes of the past. Since, therefore, he need waste no time in setting forth the facts of the story, the poet had opportunity to display his genius in the arrangement of events into plot, in the explication of character, and in the poetry of the play.

As the Greek play begins where the more modern play ends, that is, at the climax of the action, the action is unusually direct and simplified. This simplification of plot made possible that condensation which led later critics to establish the fetich of the *Three Unities:* of Time, of Place, and of Action. Aristotle says in Chapter V of the *Poetics:* "For tragedy is especially limited by one period of the sun, or admits of but a small variation from this period"; and again in Chapter VII, "a fable has an appropriate magnitude when the time of its duration is such as to render it probable that there can be a transition from prosperous fortune, according to the necessary or probable order of things as they take place. This is a sufficient definition of magnitude."[1] The sixteenth century interpretation of these passages from Aristotle's *Poetics* led the critics and dramatists who formulated the conventions of the so-called Classic school to insist absolutely that the whole action of the play must take place within one day of twenty-four hours (*Unity of Time*), in one place (*Unity of Place*), and must deal with one group of characters concerned in one action (*Unity of Action*). Only the last, Unity of Action, has been held to by all dramatists, although the introduction of a sub-plot would, strictly speaking, constitute a violation of it. Even in the dramas of the great Greek tragic poets from whose plays these rules were supposedly deduced there are instances of the violation of the *Unities of Time and Place.* In the *Eumenides* of Aeschylus, for example, the scene shifts from the Temple of Apollo at Delphi to the Temple of Athene on the Areopagus at Athens. Again in the *Ajax* of Sophocles the action changes from the shore in front of the hut of Ajax to a lonely part of the seashore, where Ajax commits suicide in view of the audience, and where the rest of the play takes place.

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[1] See: *The Greek Theatre and Its Drama* by Roy C. Flickinger (1918), and *The Greek Theatre of the Fifth Century before Christ* by James Turvey Allen (1919).

For a fuller discussion of the Classical Unities, see page 120.

The Fifth Century, B.C. was the great period of Greek history. Art and literature flourished as never since in the history of the world. The poetry of the Greek dramas of this period has never been surpassed. Thousands of plays were written, but few have survived.

## AESCHYLUS

The earliest extant play is *The Suppliants* (490 B.C.), written by **Aeschylus** (525–456 B.C.). This first of the tragic poets of Greece lived through the heroic conflict of Greece against Persia, and reliable tradition says that he fought in the battles of Marathon and Salamis. One of his plays, *The Persians,* is an historical drama celebrating the victory of Greece in the famous naval battle. Aeschylus wrote ninety or ninety-two plays, but only seven are extant. His dramas were arranged often in a *trilogy,*— a series of three plays based upon one theme and dealing with the fortunes of one of the mythical or historical families of Greek tradition, but each play complete in itself. Other Greek dramatists adopted the trilogy; but the only complete trilogy now in existence is the *Oresteia* of Aeschylus.

More than half of a drama by Aeschyus is lyrical, for even parts of the dialogue were sung. Although by introducing a second actor Aeschylus really created drama, yet the choral element forms, even in his late plays, at least three-fifths of the whole; so that the dramas of Aeschylus resemble solemn oratorios with interpolated dialogue more than what we call a play. In fact, a Wagnerian grand opera is somewhat near to the form of the Greek drama of the Fifth Century.

The theme on which Aeschylus constructs his tragedies is usually retribution,— the expiation of sin by the family unto the third and fourth generation. The characters are superhuman in their emotions and sufferings. The poetry is sublime.

The seven extant plays by Aeschylus are: *The Suppliants; The Persians; The Seven against Thebes; Prometheus;* and the *Oresteia,* consisting of three plays based on the story of Agamemnon, Clytemnaestra, and their children; namely,— *Agamemnon; Choephori* (*The Libation Bearers*); and *Eumenides* (*The Furies*).

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[1] Translation of T. Buckley.

## SOPHOCLES

The life of the successor of Aeschylus, the great **Sophocles** (497–406 B.C), whom the world has acclaimed one of the supreme dramatists of all time, spanned the whole of the most glorious era of Athens. Sophocles was thirty years younger than his celebrated contemporary, Aeschylus. Tradition says that he took part in the civic duties of an Athenian, and served as general in the Samian War. He was the friend, or at least acquaintance, of all the brilliant men of that brilliant age: of Pericles himself, of Socrates, of Herodotus, of Thucydides, of Phidias. His character made him respected and beloved by all.

Sophocles is credited with one hundred and fifteen plays, but only seven are extant. According to Aristotle, it was Sophocles who introduced a third actor, and so made the dialogue more dramatic, owing to its consequent greater complexity. The choral odes thus lost their significance as component parts of the dialogue, and became resting places in the action.

Sophocles composed isolated dramas rather than trilogies. He makes the hereditary curse upon the family less prominent, and emphasizes the testing of the will of the central character, and the struggle of mankind against Destiny. His men and women are not like the gods and colossal beings of Aeschylus's creation; for, although idealized, they are human. He bases his plays on the idea of retributive justice (Nemesis). He observes how the gods mark out for destruction those mortals who are of overbearing pride at the very moment when they seem most secure in their power. Sophocles decries excess in all things, and extols the virtues of moderation, self-control, justice, reverence, piety. "Character is destiny" in his plays. He believes that although Fate appears malignant, yet man is purified and ennobled through suffering, and that the very indomitability of his will makes him a majestic being.

The extant plays of Sophocles are: *Antigone; Ajax; Oedipus Tyrannus* (*Oedipus the King*); *Electra; Trachiniae* (*The Trachinian Maidens*); *Philoctetes; Oedipus Coloneus* (*Oedipus at Colonos*).

## ANTIGONE[1]

### SOPHOCLES

Translated by Arthur S. Way, D.Litt.

(*First presented at Athens between 440 and 445 B.C.*)

### INTRODUCTORY NOTE

*Oedipus, crushed at the calamities that fate had brought upon him, blinded himself cruelly,*[2] *and begged for banishment. But the rulers of Thebes, in obedience to an oracle, forbade him to leave. Finally, however, when his two sons Polyneikes and Eteokles, had grown to manhood under the care of their uncle Kreon, they drove their father from the city, and arranged to rule alternately, year by year. Oedipus, blind, old, and wretched, went into exile, and wandered to Colonos near Athens, accompanied by Antigone. There word was brought them by Ismene of the bitter quarrel between the two brothers; for Eteokles, though the younger, refused at the end of the year to give over the throne to Polyneikes. The latter fled to Argos, where he married the daughter of the king Adrastus. With this king and five other mighty leaders, Polyneikes marched to make*

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[1] Copyright 1909 by the Macmillan Company.

[2] See: *Oedipus Tyrannus* (*Oedipus the King*) by Sophocles.

*war on Thebes. On the way thither he sought his exiled father to ask his blessing upon the war. This Oedipus refused, and pronounced a dreadful curse upon both his sons, predicting that they should die at each other's hands. Shortly thereafter, Oedipus met a strange and mystic death.*[1] *Antigone and Ismene returned to Thebes.*

*When Oedipus was dead, his son Polyneikes led the host of the Argives, captained by seven chieftains, against Thebes. So Eteokles the king chose seven champions to meet those of the invader, and appointed himself to fight with his brother. Then Megareus, elder son of Kreon, gave his own life as a sacrifice, to fulfil the oracle which said that thus only might Thebes be saved. So when they closed in battle, the two sons of Oedipus slew each other, and of the Argives, Kapaneus was blasted by lightning even as he had scaled the city-wall, the earth was cleft asunder and swallowed up Amphiaraus, and all the other Argive chiefs were slain, save only the king of Argos, who fled with the remnant of his host.*[2]

*And herein is told how on the morrow Kreon, being left sole ruler, made a cruel proclamation, and of all the evil brought upon innocent lives, and upon himself, by his stubborn ruthlessness.*

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

KREON, *king of Thebes*
ANTIGONE *and* ISMENE, *sisters of Polyneikes*
HAIMON, *son of Kreon, betrothed to Antigone*
TEIRESIAS, *a blind prophet*
EURYDIKE, *wife of Kreon*
WATCHMAN
MESSENGER
SERVANT
CHORUS, *consisting of Theban Elders*
GUARDS, ATTENDANTS, and the CHILD who is guide to Teiresias.

*In front of the royal palace at Thebes*

*Enter* ANTIGONE *and* ISMENE

*Antigone.* Ismene, sister mine, one soul with me,
This know'st thou—all the Curse of Oedipus
On us twain Zeus fulfilleth ere we die?
Yea, nought there is of anguish, nought of ruin,
Of shame nought, of dishonour, but all these
Have I seen bound up with thy life and mine.
And now, what talk they through our thronging streets
Of proclamation by the ruler made?
Know'st aught?—hast heard?—or dost thou heed it not
When rusheth on our friends the doom of foes?

*Ismene.* To me no word, Antigone, of our friends
Hath come, or sweet or bitter, since the hour
That saw us twain of brethren twain bereaved,
Who in one day by mutual slaughter died.
And since the Argive host[3] in this past night
Vanished from view, nothing beyond I know,
Nor if I be more blest or more accurst.

*An.* I knew it; and for this cause drew thee forth
The palace-gates, that thou alone might'st hear.

*Is.* What is 't that so for utterance fevers thee?

*An.* How?—hath not Kreon honoured of our brethren

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[1] See: *Oedipus Coloneus* (*Oedipus at Colonos*) by Sophocles
[2] See: *The Seven against Thebes* by Aeschylus; *Phoenissae* (*The Phoenician Maidens*) by Euripides.
[3] Argive host: the army from Argos.

One with a tomb, one with denial shamed?
Eteokles, say men, Kreon, following
Righteousness, use and wont, beneath the earth
Hath hidden, to be in honour midst the dead.
But Polyneikes' corpse, wretched in death,
By proclamation to the citizens
He saith, let none entomb, let none bewail,
But leave unwept, unburied, treasure-trove
For birds that spy their banquet's revel-joy.
Thus, say they, noble Kreon unto thee
And me—ay, me, I say!—hath given decree,
And hither comes to publish plainly this
To all which know not, neither counts such deed
As nought; but whoso doeth aught of this,
Death—death by stoning, waiteth him in Thebes!
So stands the matter: soon shalt thou give proof
If thou be noble or degenerate.
*Is.* Yet, stricken heart, wherein, if this be so,
Loosing or binding can I aught avail?
*An.* See to it—wilt thou share the toil, the deed?
*Is.* What venture this? Ah, what is thine intent?
*An.* Say, wilt thou aid me to take up our dead?
*Is.* Wouldst bury him?—a thing to Thebes forbidden!
*An.* My brother and thine? Yea!—though thou will it not.
Traitress to him I never will be found.[1]
*Is.* O desperate girl!—when Kreon hath forbidden?
*An.* No right hath he to hold me from mine own.
*Is.* Woe's me! Bethink thee, sister, how our father
Abhorred hath perished and in evil fame,
Through his sin self-detected, who himself
Stabbed both his eyes with his own murderous hand:
Then, too, his wife, his mother,—twain in one!—
With twinèd noose made havoc of her life:
Thirdly, in one day have our brethren twain—
Unhappy men!—in mutual slaughter wrought
Each one a kinsman's doom with brother-hands.
Now, we twain, left alone,—O think, what end
Most awful waits us, if, in law's despite,
We transgress princes' fiat and their rule.
Nay more, of this must we bethink us too—
Women are we: we cannot strive with men.
Think, too, we are ruled by stronger than ourselves,
And must submit to this, ay, worse than this.
I then will ask those in the underworld
To pardon, since I am constrained hereto,
And will obey authority. There lies
No wisdom in exceeding duty's claim.
*An.* Not I will urge thee!—should thou crave hereafter
To help, unwelcome partner shalt thou be!
Be such as seems thee good: but him will I
Entomb. To perish doing this were glory!
A holy crime shall mine be: then the loving
Shall lie by her beloved. Through longer space
My dead ones must I pleasure, than the living;
For there shall I lie ever. An thou wilt,
What the Gods honour still dishonour thou.
*Is.* I do them no dishonour; but I am
Impotent to defy a nation's voice.
*An.* This be thy choice then. I will go to heap
The grave-mound for my brother, my beloved.

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[1] **Traitress to him . . . :** Polyneikes's last request of Antigone before he went to war against his brother was that she should lay him in his tomb with due funeral rites. See *Oedipus at Colonos*, line 1410.

*Is.* Oh hapless! Sorely do I fear for thee!
*An.* Quake not for me! Deliver thine own soul.
*Is.* At least declare thou unto none this deed.
In secret veil it: that withal will I.
*An.* O nay! denounce me! Hated shalt thou be
Far more, if thou proclaim not this to all.
*Is.* O hot heart in an emprise deadly-chill!
*An.* I know I please whom most I ought to pleasure.
*Is.* Ay, if thou couldst! Thou crav'st the impossible.
*An.* Then, when my strength fails, will I hold mine hand.
*Is.* One should not seek the impossible at all.
*An.* If this thou say, by me shalt thou be loathed,
And by the dead shalt justly be abhorred.
Nay, leave me, and my folly, mine alone,
To meet this dread doom. I shall meet no fate
So vile as is a death of infamy.
*Is.* If thou art fixed, go. Mad thy mission is,
Though to thy dear ones thou art lover true.
[*Exeunt*

*Enter* CHORUS

[*Str. 1*
*Chorus.* Glory of sundawn, no day-spring in years overpast hath unfolden
Splendour to Thebes such as thine: at the last thine appearing hath shone
Brightening the eyelids of morning with flush of a day all-golden,
As over the flowings of Dirkê[1] thy footfalls of beauty have gone—
Footfalls of triumph withal, for the host of the shields white-gleaming,
Warriors that wended from Argos in panoplied squadrons of war—
Lo, how thine arrows drave headlong the horse-manes stormily streaming!
Lo, how they strained in the race as their panic-struck lines fled afar!
That host, by reason of treacherous dealing
Of prince with prince, did the exile bring
Down on our land—as the scream shrill-pealing
Of an eagle, so did their war-shout ring,
As the mailèd multitude onward pressed
With surge upon surge of tossing crest;
High over us that war-eagle wheeling
Overshadowed the land with his snow-white wing.

[*Ant. 1*
Over our dwellings he hung, and with jaws wide-gaping he waited,
While his spears blood-thirsting around our seven gates[2] rolled their flood.
Ha! but he fled away thence; he had vanished, or ever he sated
The ravening jaws that had lusted to drink of our children's blood!—
Vanished, or ever the pine-devouring flame of the anger
Of the Fire-god could leap o'er the ramparts of Thebê's crown of pride—
Vanished; and hard on the track of his flight strained fiercely the clangour
Of the battle-wrath of the Dragon—an enemy hard to abide!

For unto Zeus are exceeding abhorrent
The reckless vaunts of an arrogant tongue;
And he looked on our foes as their mighty torrent
Came onward sweeping, and haughtily rung
The pride of their battle-harness of gold.
Yea, one on our rampart's crest laid hold:
He was straining his throat to the pæan, the warrant
Of triumph—his levin[3] on high Zeus swung:

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[1] **Dirkê:** a famous fountain at Thebes.

[2] **our seven gates:** Thebes was known as the city "of the seven gates."

[3] **levin:** lightning.

[*Str. 2*

Full in his face hath he dashed it, and down, down dizzily whirling
Fell he, and crashed on the earth, who torch in hand so late,
Maddening in frenzy of onset, against our city was hurling
The blast of the furious breath of the pitiless storm of his hate.
Ha, but he nowise had looked for such issue, such doom as found him!
Yea, and to many a foeman beside was allotted a grave,
For all share of the prey, by the terrible War-god,[1] who flashed around him
Havoc of thunderous smiting, a helper mighty to save!

For captains seven at our gate-towers seven,
Champions against like champions arrayed,
Their harness of brass for tribute have given
Unto Zeus, who the tide of their onset stayed—
Save twain, those dolorous-fated ones
Of the self-same father and mother, sons:
With spears victorious have these both striven;
Both victors and vanquished, in death are they laid.

[*Ant. 2*

Victory, she of the glorious name, from the heaven hath descended
Flashing answer of smiles to the smile of Thebê the Chariot-queen.
We that from war in the gates are delivered, whose anguish is ended,
Let us ordain everlasting oblivion of ills that have been.
Now with the nightlong dance, and now with the triumph-chorus
Seek we the feet of the Gods, let us throng each hallowed fane:
Yea, and may Bacchus, our own land's scion,[2] lead on before us,
Bacchus, whose feet in the wild dance shake our Thebê's plain.

Lo, there Menoiteus' son, the land's new lord,
Kreon, made king when Heaven's great award
Healed with new fortunes our adversity,
What counsel laboureth in his thoughts' deep sea,
That for communing he convokes this band
Of elders of the war-delivered land,
Sending to each and all his high command?

*Enter* KREON

*Kreon.* Friends, God hath made our Thebes, late buffeted
By his wild surge, ride even-keeled again.
Now by my messengers I have summoned you
Of all the folk, because I know that ye
Aye held in reverence Laïus' sovereignty;[3]
And after, when by Oedipus Thebes was saved,
And after he had perished, to their sons
Still with unshaken loyalty ye clave.
So now, since they by this twin fate have died
Both in one day, each slayer and each slain
With death-pollution as of suicide-hand,
Lo, I possess the lordship and the throne
By right of nearest kinship to the dead.
Now no man's heart and spirit may be known
Wholly, nor purpose, till he have been tried
By touchstone of authority and law.
For he who helms the whole great ship of state,
And unto noble counsels cleaveth not,
But turns the key of fear upon his tongue,
Most vile I deem him, and have ever deemed.
And whoso sets his nearest or his dearest
Above his country, him I hold as naught.
I—Zeus be witness who beholdeth all—
Will not keep silence when I mark my folk

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[1] War-god: Ares (Mars).

[2] our own land's scion: Thebes was supposed to have been the birthplace of Bacchus.

[3] Laïus: the king of Thebes, whom Oedipus slew, not knowing that he was his own father. See *Oedipus Tyrannus*.

With ruin threatened in deliverance' stead:
Nor ever will I make my country's foe
My friend, who thus discern, that she it is
Which saves us. While she rideth even-keeled
Beneath us, then alone we make true friends.
By such laws will I magnify our Thebes.
And, in accord hereto, I publish this
To all the people, touching Oedipus' sons,
That Eteokles, who for Thebes hath died
Fighting, whose spear hath wrought heroic deeds,
Be hidden in a tomb, and with all rites
Be hallowed which attend the heroic dead.
But for yon man, his brother Polyneikes,
Who back from exile came, and would have burnt
Wholly with fire his fathers' city and Gods
Ancestral, lusted to have lapped the blood
Of kindred, to have haled her folk to thraldom,
This city is by proclamation warned
That none shall give him burial, none lament:
He must be left, a corpse for birds and hounds
To batten on, a sight of outrage-shame.
Such is my purpose: never by mine hand
Shall sinners be exalted o'er the righteous:
But, whoso unto Thebes is loyal, dead
No less than living will I honour him.
*Cho.* This seems thee good, Kreon Menoikeus' son,
Touching the city's foes and loyal friends!—
O yea, thou mayst enact what ordinance
Thou wilt for dead men and for us who live.
*Kre.* See then that ye be guardians of mine hest.
*Cho.* Ah, lay this burden upon younger men!
*Kre.* Nay, watchers o'er the corpse even now are set.
*Cho.* What charge beside is this, then, thou wouldst give?
*Kre.* Consent not unto who would disobey.
*Cho.* None is so mad that he is fain to die.
*Kre.* Ay, that the guerdon is: yet greed of gain,
Egged on by hope, ofttimes hath ruined men.

*Enter* WATCHMAN

*Watchman.* O King, I dare not say that I have come
Lifting with breathless speed a light-winged foot;
For many a wavering of spirit had I,
Wheeling about to turn back in the way.
Yea, oft communing with me spake mine heart—
"Poor fool, why go to meet thy punishment?
Wretch, tarriest thou?—if from another man
Kreon learn this, how canst thou choose but smart?"
I pondering thus, my laggard speed was slow;
And so became my short wayfaring long.
But my resolve to come to thee prevailed
At last. Though naught my tale be, I will tell it,
Clutching at this hope do I come to thee,
That I shall suffer nought beyond my fate.
*Kre.* Now wherefore hast thou this faintheartedness?
*Watch.* First will I speak for mine own self:—the deed
I wrought not, saw not who the doer was;
Nor justly should I suffer punishment.
*Kre.* What heedful aim, what fencing of thyself
All round! 'Tis plain thou hast ill news to tell.
*Watch.* Yea, heavy tidings give the bearer pause.
*Kre.* Make end! Speak out, man, and then get thee gone!
*Watch.* So then, I tell. That corpse—some one hath given
Burial thereto, and fled, hath cast dry dust
Upon the flesh, and paid the death-rites due.
*Kre.* What say'st thou? Who of men hath dared the deed?

*Watch.* I know not; for no stroke of any spade
Was there, nor soil cast up by mattock. Hard
And dry the ground was, all unscored by wheel
Of wain. No trace the phantom doer left.
But, when the first day-watchman showed to us
The deed, with sinking hearts we marvelled all.
That corpse from sight was hidden—not entombed,
But strewn with light dust, as to avert the curse.
No prints of wild beast nor of any hound
That came and tare him, there were manifest.
Then strife brake out of bitter clashing words:
For guard charged guard therewith. It would have come
To blows at last: was none to cry “Hold!” there,
For each man seemed the doer of the deed,
Yet none convict; all pleaded innocence.
Ready were we to grasp the glowing iron,
To pass through fire, to invoke the Gods by oath
That neither had we done it, nor with any
Shared guilty knowledge of device or deed.
But when no profit of our searching came,
One spake at last a thing that made all bow
Earthward our heads with fear. Was none that knew
How to gainsay it, neither how to do it
And rue it not. His word was, that to thee
We must report the deed, and nowise hide.
This rede prevailed; and me, unhappy me
The lot condemned to win this goodly prize.
Loth and unwelcome stand I here, I know.
None loves the herald of an evil tale.

*Cho.* King, all this while my soul hath whispered me
This question—Is a God’s hand seen herein?

*Kre.* Peace, ere thy babble fill me full with wrath,
Lest witless thou be found as well as old!
Thou speakest things intolerable, who say’st
That Gods for yon dead man take any thought.
They, for high honour to their benefactor,
Entomb him, quotha!—him who came to fire
Their pillar-circlèd fanes and offerings,
And to make havoc of their land and laws!
Hast ever marked Gods honouring wicked men?
It cannot be: nay, Theban rebels long
Have murmured this against me, covertly
Have tossed impatient heads; nor loyally
Bowed ’neath the yoke their necks, to brook my rule.
By them these guards—O yea, I know it well!—
Have been with bribes suborned to do this thing.
Nought current among men hath been devised
Accurst as gold. By this are cities made
Desolate; men are banished from their homes.
This teacheth, this perverteth good men’s hearts
To champion many a shameful enterprise,
Yea, hath taught men to harbour villainy,
And to know every deed of godlessness.
Ha! but they who for bribes brought this to pass
Shall reap at last the vengeance they have sown!
Nay, if Zeus yet hath reverence of me,
Know well—ay, under oath I tell thee this—
Except ye find and set before mine eyes
The man whose hand hath wrought this burial,
Mere death ye shall not win, ere, hanging long

Alive, ye have revealed rebellion's secret,
That ye may know whence safely gain is gotten,
Ere ye again clutch at it—learn that not
In every pit may treasure-lovers dig:
For thou through shameful gains shalt oftener see
Men finding ruin than deliverance.
*Watch.* Wilt grant me speech, or must I so depart?
*Kre.* Hast learnt not yet that thy words do but chafe me?
*Watch.* So?—are thine ears, or is thy spirit galled?
*Kre.* How dar'st thou probe and pry into my wound?
*Watch.* Thy soul that doer chafes, I but thine ears.
*Kre.* Out!—what a babbling rogue in grain is here!
*Watch.* As it may be—but this deed did not I.
*Kre.* That didst thou!—yea, didst sell thy life for gold.
*Watch.* Alas! 'tis ill when deemsters falsely deem![1]
*Kre.* Ay, prate of deeming thou!—if ye find not
The doers of this deed, ye shall proclaim
That felon gains breed only misery.
[*Exit*

*Watch.* O yea, may he be found! But, be he ta'en,
Or be he not—for this with fortune rests,—
Me shalt thou see not hither come again.
Yea, now, delivered past all expectation
And hope, I owe the Gods exceeding thanks. [*Exit*

[*Str. 1*
*Cho.* Many a wonder walks the earth, but wondrous
None is as Man: across the sea-foam-white
Driven by the storm-blast, plunging through the thund'rous
Chasms of surge, he wings his aweless flight;
Layeth his grasp on Earth, supreme, undying
Mother of Gods, and ever year by year
To and fro pass his ploughs; the steed's sons plying
Ever her stubborn strength, outweary her.

[*Ant. 1*
Yea, and the airy-hearted birds he snareth,
Trappeth the savage prowlers of the wold,
Takes the brine-haunters whom the deep sea beareth
In his net-meshes—Man the cunning-souled;
Quelleth the forest-couching, mountain-roaming
Monsters by his devices masterful,
Bridles the stormy-maned, indignant-foaming
Horses, and yokes the tireless mountain-bull.

[*Str. 2*
Speech hath he taught himself, and thought swift-flying
Windlike, all instincts which the state maintain;
Shelter from frost he hath found, from cheerless lying
Under the bleak sky, and from arrowy rain.
Ever resourceful, found in nought resourceless,
Dauntless he meets the future's mysteries:
Helpless against Death only, the remorseless,
His cunning foileth desperate maladies.

[*Ant. 2*
Crafty inventions, subtle past believing,
Now unto evil bring him, now to good.
When he hath honoured Law, by oath receiving
Justice's yoke, proudly his state hath stood.
He is an outcast, whose presumptuous daring
Moves him to be with sin confederate bound:
Never abiding by my hearth, nor sharing
Thoughts of my soul, be such transgressor found!

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[1] 'tis ill . . . deem! "'tis sad, truly, that he who judges should misjudge."—Jebb's translation.

*Enter the* Watchman, *with* Guards, *leading* Antigone *in bonds*

A portent from the Gods!—perplexed am I
Hereat!—I know her—how shall I deny
That this, this maiden, is Antigone?
Hapless one!—hapless he who fathered thee,
Even Oedipus! What means this? Can it be
That thou hast set the King's behest at nought?—
Wast taken in folly?—hither captive brought?
*Watch.* This, this is she, the doer of that deed!
We took her burying!—where is Kreon, where?
*Cho.* Lo, from yon halls to meet thy wish he comes.

*Enter* Kreon

*Kre.* How now? With what hap chimes my coming forth?[1]
*Watch.* King, ne'er let man bar any path by oaths;
For second thoughts belie the purpose. I
Had sworn that hither nought should drag me again,
Who fled storm-buffeted before thy threats.
Ah, but the joy that dawns beyond all hope
Hath not its like in depth and height of bliss.
I come, albeit barred by oath therefrom,
Bringing this girl, who hath been found arraying
His burial. Not for this the lot was cast:
Nay, mine own prize is this, none other man's.
Now, King, thyself take, as thou wilt, this maid:
Thou question her and sift. For me, I claim
Now to go free, escaped that perilous snare.
*Kre.* Thou bringest—*her!* In what wise taken? Where?
*Watch.* Even she was burying him. Thou knowest all.
*Kre.* Know'st what thou say'st?—dost wander in thy speech?
*Watch.* Her saw I burying the corpse by thee
Banned burial. Clear and plain are now my words?
*Kre.* How was she seen? How taken in the fact?
*Watch.* Thus was the matter:—when we reached the spot,
With those thy dread threats heavy on our hearts,
We swept off all the dust wherewith the corpse
Was veiled, and wholly bared that clammy form;
Then on the ridge sat down to watch therefrom
To windward of the thing's corruption-reek,
Man goading man with taunts to wakefulness,
That none might shirk his portion of the toil.
So long this lasted till in heaven's mid-height
Rested the splendour of the Sun-god's wheel,
And his heat scorched. From earth a sudden whirlwind
A storm-blast raised, fierce spasm of tortured air,
Smothered the plain, cuffed all its woodland tresses;
And the wide heaven was crammed and choked therewith.
With eyes shut we endured the heaven-sent plague.
After long space this died away; and lo,
We saw this maid! She wailed far-piercing shrieks,
As of the bitter-hearted bird that sees
Empty her nest, her couch bereft of fledglings.
So also she, when bare she saw the corpse,
Wailed with strong crying: bitter malisons
Invoked she upon them that wrought the deed.
Straightway she brings the dry dust in her hands,
Uplifts on high the fair-chased urn of brass,

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[1] With what . . . forth? "What hath chanced, that makes my coming timely?"—Jebb's translation.

And crowns the corse with offerings thrice outpoured.
We saw, we rushed, and straightway caught the prey;
Yet was she not in any wise dismayed:
And with the former crime and that new deed
We charged her; nothing she denied of all:
Which thing was both my gladness and my grief.
For to escape from scathe oneself is sweet,
Most sweet: but to drag down one's friends to scathe
Is bitter. Yet all such remorse to me
Is nought, beside mine own deliverance.

*Kre.* Thou, thou who bendest to the earth thy brows,
Dost thou confess this deed, or dost deny?

*An.* I do confess it: I deny it not.

*Kre.* Man, take thee hence whither thou wilt soe'er,
Acquitted of the charge of treason, free.
[*Exit* WATCHMAN
Thou, tell—with no long speech: thy words be few—
Knew'st thou the edict that forbade this deed?

*An.* I knew—how should I not?—'twas published wide.

*Kre.* Ha! daredst thou transgress this ordinance?

*An.* Yea!—for not Zeus, I ween, proclaimed this thing;
Nor Justice, co-mate with the Nether Gods,
Not she ordained men such unnatural laws!
Nor deemed I that thine edict had such force,
That thou, who art but mortal, couldst o'erride
The unwritten and unswerving laws of Heaven.
Not of to-day and yesterday they are,
But everlasting: none can date their birth.
Was I to fear the wrath of any man,
And brave Gods' vengeance for defying these?
I knew that I must die—how should I not?—
Though thou hadst ne'er proclaimed this. If I die
Before mine hour, I count it for my gain.
For whoso lives, as I, beset with sorrows
Manifold, how should death but be his gain?
Even so for me to light upon this doom
Is no grief. But had I endured that he,
My mother's son, should lie a tombless corpse,
That were mine anguish: not for this I grieve.
But if to thee my words mere folly seem,
I am haply charged with folly by the fool.

*Cho.* The fierce blood of the father in the child
Shows. 'Neath the rod she will not learn to bow.

*Kre.* Ha! know thou that these over-stubborn wills
Most surely break down. Ay, the stiffest steel,
Tempered to adamant hardness in the fire,
Snapt short and shivered oftenest shalt thou see.
I have known fiery-mettled steeds subdued
With a small curb. Tush, overweening pride
Is not for him who is but his neighbour's thrall.
And she—well schooled was she in insolence
When she transgressed the statute we ordained.
That did she, and lo, this new insolence,
To vaunt thereof and make a mock at sin!
Nay, sooth, no man am I, the man is she,
If this be her triumph, if it cost her nought!
Be she my sister's child, be she more near
Than all beside whom Zeus our Hearthward shields,
She and her sister shall not 'scape a doom
Most fearful—yea, I charge that other too
With being co-plotter of this burial.
Summon ye her: I saw her in yon hall

Frenzied but now, and all distraught of soul.
Ay, guilty minds oft, ere their crimes be wrought,
Betray their crooked deeds in darkness planned.
But most I loathe the wretch who, trapped in trespass
Redhanded, fain would brazen out his sin.
*An.* Now thou hast caught me, wouldst thou more than slay?
*Kre.* No whit more I. All have I, having this.
*An.* Why then delay?—seeing that of thy words
Nought pleaseth me—God grant it ne'er may please!—
And to thee likewise odious are mine.
Yet whence could I have gotten me renown
More glorious than from laying in the tomb
My brother? This of all that stand hereby
Should be approved, did fear not chain their tongues.
All-fortunate is royalty, most in this,
That it may say and do whate'er it will.
*Kre.* Thou only of Kadmeians[1] seest thus.
*An.* These also see; but thy fear curbs their tongue.
*Kre.* Art not ashamed to oppose this people's will?
*An.* No! Shame is none in honouring kindred blood.
*Kre.* Was he no kin, who fighting with him fell?
*An.* Kin, of one father and one mother sprung.
*Kre.* Dar'st thou defend a grace which wrongeth him?[2]
*An.* This shall the dead one's witness not confirm.
*Kre.* Yea, if thou esteem him even as yon felon.
*An.* Not, not his slave hath perished, but his brother.
*Kre.* This came to waste Thebes, that her champion stood.
*An.* Yet Hades craveth equal laws for all.
*Kre.* Nay, good and evil have not equal claim.
*An.* Who knows but this hath sanction therebelow?
*Kre.* A foe is not a friend, though he have died.
*An.* I am made for league of love, and not of hate.
*Kre.* To Hades pass, then. Love, if love thou must,
The dead! No woman ruleth while I live.

*Cho.* Lo, forth of the gates Ismene is coming,
With the tears of her sister-love downflowing;
And sorrow's cloud on her brows, overglooming
Her face where the blood looks out red-glowing,
Distaineth[3] her cheek fair-blooming.

*Enter* Guards *with* Ismene

*Kre.* Thou, viper that hast crept into mine home
To privily drain my blood!—and I knew not
I nursed two fiends, subverters of my throne!—
Tell me, hadst thou too in yon burial
A part, or wilt thou swear thou knewest nought?
*Is.* I did the deed—if she say yea to this:
I share and bear the burden of the blame.
*An.* Nay, justice shall not suffer this in thee.
Thou wouldst not: I for partner took thee not.
*Is.* Nay, but in thine ills I am not ashamed
To voyage in affliction's bark with thee.
*An.* Whose was the deed know Hades and the dead.
I love not love that loveth but in words.
*Is.* Ah, shame me not, my sister, nor reject

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[1] Kadmeians: Thebans.

[2] Dar'st . . . him? "Why, then, dost thou render a grace that is impious in his sight?"—Jebb's translation.

[3] Distaineth: stains.

From dying with thee, and honouring our dead!
*An.* Have no part thou in my death! Claim not that
Thou touchedst not. Suffice it that I die.
*Is.* What life to me were dear, forlorn of thee?
*An.* Ask Kreon. He to thee is near and dear.
*Is.* Why stab me thus? It cannot profit thee.
*An.* Anguished my laughter is that mocketh thee.
*Is.* Ah, tell how I may help thee even now!
*An.* Thou?—save thyself. I grudge thee not escape.
*Is.* Woe's me! May I not even share thy doom?
*An.* No! Thou hast chosen to live, and I to die.
*Is.* Not without protest uttered first of me.
*An.* The living held thee wise, but me the dead.
*Is.* Yet mine offence—of love—is great as thine.
*An.* Fear not: thou livest; but mine heart hath died
Long since, that I should serve the dead, my dead.
*Kre.* These damsels twain—this hath gone mad but now,
Say I; that other from her birth was crazed.
*Is.* Now nay, O King: no heart that ever beat
Steadfast abides mid ills, but is distraught.
*Kre.* As thine was, when the ill-doers' path thou chosest.
*Is.* Yea; for without her what is life to me?
*Kre.* Her? Say not that word; for she is no more.
*Is.* How? Wilt thou slay thine own son's plighted bride?
*Kre.* Tush?—tilthlands wait of other womenfolk.
*Is.* Not by such love-pledge knit as she to him.[1]
*Kre.* Out! Wicked brides for my sons I abhor!
*An.* Oh Haimon!—dearest! thine own sire shames thee!
*Kre.* A mere offence art thou and thy troth-plight.
*Cho.* What, wilt thou of this maiden rob thy son?
*Kre.* Hades it is who shall this bridal bar.
*Cho.* It is, meseems, determined that she die.
*Kre.* Ay, both for thee and me. Linger no more!
Lead them in, thralls. These must from this time forth
Be women, suffered not to range at will.
Ha, even the bold recoil, when hard at hand
They see the end of life, see Hades' gate.
[*Exeunt* GUARDS, *with* ANTIGONE *and* ISMENE

[*Str.* 1
*Cho.* Happy are they whose life of calamity never hath tasted!
Ay, for when once a house by the stroke of the Gods hath been shaken,
Then shall its hearth and its roof by the curse be never forsaken:
Onward the doom is passed from life unto life woe-wasted;

Like as when forward driven by the fierce-blowing blasts from the Norland
Raceth the white surf over the face of the sea dark-glooming
Rolling up sand from the sea-floor, and roareth with sullen booming
Fronting the buffeting surge each storm-tormented foreland.
[*Ant.* 1
Sorrows from far-off days on the living Labdakids[2] ever
Falling as snow-flakes, are heaped on the woes of each past generation:
Sorrows endured by the dead earn not for the living cessation
From anguish: a God ever smiteth them down; there is none to deliver!

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[1] Not by . . . him. "But there can never be such love as bound him to her."—Jebb's translation.

[2] Labdakids: descendants of Labdakos, father of Laïus, father of Oedipus.

Hope for the House, like a light breaking forth from the womb of the morning,
Streamed o'er the last of its roots: it hath perished in night yet deeper.
Dust o'er the dead strewn gave the scythe to the hands of the Reaper—
That, and folly of speech, and the frenzy that heeds no warning.

[*Str.* 2

Zeus, what proud deeds that man hath wrought thy power can override?—
That power which Sleep o'ermastereth not, who snareth all beside,
Nor Heaven's months that tireless race: aged never by their flight
Thou dwellest mid the glory-space, Olympus' splendour-light.
Through all the future's boundless range,
As through the past, this shall not change,
This law of thine eternal years—that nought for man too great
Shall, without bringing down a curse, exalt our mortal state.

[*Ant.* 2

Hope—'tis a bird whose wandering wings to some bring strength and trust;
False lures to many a man it brings of hollow-hearted lust;
He sees not Doom, the Gods' sleuth-hound that follows ever nigher,
Till crumbles 'neath his feet the ground into a gulf of fire.
The ancient sage in wisdom spake,
"Evil for good that man will take
Whose soul the mocking Gods beguile to tread in ruin's way:
Safe fares he for a little while—then the net traps the prey."

Lo, Haimon, of thy sons the last
And youngest-born!
Doth he draw near with grief aghast
That she is torn
From him, from life, his plighted bride Antigone?
Bitter of soul for hopes belied
Now cometh he?

*Enter* HAIMON

*Kre.* Better than seers can tell we soon shall know.
Son, sure thou com'st not wroth against thy sire,
Hearing the sentence on thy promised bride?
Or am I dear to thee, whate'er I do?

*Haimon.* Thine am I, father: and thy wise resolves
Guide me aright, and I will follow them.
For me no bridal justly shall be held
More worth the winning than thy righteous guidance.

*Kre.* Yea, such in heart, my son, thou shouldest be,
Submitting thee in all things to thy sire.
To this end do men pray that they may have
Sons duteous-souled begotten in their halls,
To render evil for evil unto foes,
And, honour, as he doth, their father's friend.
But who begetteth sons unprofitable,
What canst thou say such man hath fathered, save
Pain for himself, for them that hate him laughter?
Oh never then, my son, at pleasure's lure
Cast wisdom out for a girl's sake, knowing this,
That 'tis to embrace the chill of death to clasp
For wife a wicked couchmate in thine halls.
Than a false friend what plague-spot can be worse?
Nay, spue her forth, and cast out, as a foe,
This girl, to wed in Hades—boots not whom!
For, seeing I have ta'en her in the fact
Defying this whole nation—she alone!—
False unto Thebes I will not be; I will
Slay her! So let her hymn the Lord of Kinship
Zeus! If I warm rebellion by mine hearth,
The more do I make strangers mutinous.
For whoso ruleth justly his own house
Shall also in the state deal righteously.
But whoso doth transgress, and wrest the laws,

Or thinks to browbeat them that rule the state,
Never shall such an one win praise of me.
But whom the state appoints must we obey
In small and great things, just things—ay, unjust!
Who thus obeys, I fear not to maintain,
Hath learnt to rule and to submit to rule,
And in the storm of spears to hold the post
Appointed him, a comrade loyal and staunch.
But greater curse is none than scorn of rule.
Towns this destroyeth, this subverteth homes
In ruin: this aids battling spears to shatter
Ranks on a stricken field: such as abide
Unbroken, only obedience saves their lives.
So championed must the friends of order be,
And to a woman never must we yield.
Better be by a man dethroned, if this
Must be, so we be called not woman-cowed!
*Cho.* We, if time have not stol’n away our wit,
Deem that thou wisely pleadest this thy cause.
*Hai.* Father, the Gods implant in man sound wit,
Noblest of all possessions under heaven.
I cannot say—O never may I learn
The words!—that this thou sayest is not right;
Yet might another man not err herein.
Now ’tis my natural place to watch whate’er
Men say, or do, or censure, touching thee;
For thy glance awes the citizen from speech
Such as thou shalt not hearken well-content.
’Tis my part, as one darkness-screened, to hear
All moans of Thebes’ compassion for yon maid.
“She of all women merits least,” they cry,
“For deeds most glorious foully thus to die,—
Who would not, when her brother slaughtered lay,
Suffer him to be tombless, nor devoured
By ravening dogs nor any carrion fowl.
Is she not worthy golden honour’s meed?”
So runs the darkling rumour of bated breath.
No treasure in mine eyes is more of worth
Than is thy welfare, thine, O father mine.
Wherein can sons more triumph than in glory
Of sires, and sires in fair renown of sons?
Ah, bear not in thy breast one rooted thought,
That what thou say’st is right, and nought beside.
For whoso deems that he alone is wise,
Or that his tongue or spirit hath no peer—
Such, when laid bare, are found but emptiness.
How wise soe’er a man be, shame is none
Ever to learn, nor be too stubborn-souled.
Thou see’st by storm-swol’n torrents many a tree
Which, yielding, saves its utmost tender sprays:
But root and branch they perish which resist.
So, if one strain a vessel’s mainsheet taut,
Slackening no whit, he overturns his bark,
And thenceforth voyages keel uppermost.
Refrain from wrath, and grant repentance room.
For, if a word of counsel from my youth
Befits, I say that chief of men is he
Who is fulfilled with knowledge in all things.
If not—for oft the scale inclines not so—
’Tis good to learn of those who counsel well.
*Cho.* King, if he speaks in season, learn of him;
And of thy sire thou: both have spoken well.
*Kre.* How, is mine age to be in wisdom schooled
By the raw youth of such an one as this?

*Hai.* In nought that is not just. Though I be young,
At years shouldst thou look not so much as deeds.
*Kre.* Deeds, quotha!—to show rebels reverence![1]
*Hai.* Never will I say, "Reverence evil men!"
*Kre.* How? Is not *she* plague-stricken with this folly?
*Hai.* Not so saith all the folk of this our Thebes.
*Kre.* Ha! shall the city school me in my duty?
*Hai.* Is this not like the speech of some raw boy?
*Kre.* How?—rule by others' judgment, not mine own?
*Hai.* The chattel of one man—no state is that!
*Kre.* Is not a state accounted his who rules?
*Hai.* Fitly wert thou sole ruler of a desert!
*Kre.* The woman's champion is this boy, meseems.
*Hai.* If thou a woman be. For thee I care.
*Kre.* O knave of knaves, to wrangle with thy sire!
*Hai.* Yea, for I see thee err—unjustly err.
*Kre.* How?—I, who magnify mine office, err?
*Hai.* Spurning Gods' dues thou magnifiest it not.
*Kre.* O grovelling spirit, subject to a woman!
*Hai.* Ne'er shalt thou find me subject to base deeds!
*Kre.* For her in any wise is all thy plea—
*Hai.* And for thee, me, and for the Nether Gods.
*Kre.* Ne'er shalt thou wed her—not a living bride!
*Hai.* Then shall she die—and not alone shall die!
*Kre.* Ha! mounts thine insolence to the height of threats?
*Hai.* What threat, in warning counsels void of wisdom?
*Kre.* Fool, void of wit, wouldst school my wit?—shalt rue!
*Hai.* Witless I'd call thee, wert thou not my father.
*Kre.* Thou girl's slave, mock not me with mock-respect!
*Hai.* Wouldst have the talk all thine, nor hear reply?
*Kre.* Is it even so?—by yonder heaven, be sure
Thou to thy cost shalt gall me with abuse.
Bring forth the accursèd, that before his eyes
Straight in her bridegroom's presence she may die!
*Hai.* Nay, not in my sight! Never dream thou this!
Nor near me shall she die! Nowhere on earth
Thou with thine eyes again shalt see my face!
So with such friends as brook it play the madman.[2] [*Exit*

*Cho.* The man, O King, in wrath hath rushed away.
Young hearts like his in pain wax desperate.
*Kre.* Let his pride, more than human, work its will:
These damsels twain shall he pluck not from doom.
*Cho.* How? Dost thou purpose to put *both* to death?
*Kre.* Not her who touched the corpse not. Thou say'st well.
*Cho.* And by what doom dost purpose to slay her?
*Kre.* I'll lead her by a track of men untrod,
And living hide her in a rocky cell,
With food so much as serves for expiation,
That Thebes may wholly escape pollution so.
There crying on Hades, whom she reverences
Alone, she shall from death be haply saved;
Or there at least shall prove that reverence
For things in Hades is but labour lost. [*Exit*

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[1] **Deeds . . . reverence!** "Is it a merit to honour the unruly?"—Jebb's translation.

[2] **So . . . madman.** "Rave, then, with such friends as can endure thee!"—Jebb's translation.

[*Str.*

*Cho.* Love, none may withstand when thou workest,
O resistless in fight!
Wealth, power, to thy thraldom thou bendest
When stormlike thereon thou descendest:
In a maiden's soft dimple thou lurkest
Ambushed through night.
Over surges of sea thou ridest;
'Neath the huts of the wilderness hidest;
Not the Gods everliving may shun thee;
Not the sons of a day may outrun thee;
And from him in whose heart thou abidest
Reason takes flight.

[*Ant.*

The minds of the just art thou turning
Evermore aside
Unto wrong for their own undoing.
Yea, stirred by thy subtle wooing
This strife between kinsmen is burning.
In the eyes of the bride
Is the glamour of love outflowing,
Is thy light victorious glowing.
Yea, thou in thy sway supernal
Art throned by the Laws Eternal;
Aphrodite makes sport of them, showing
Might none may abide.

Ah, now I too am driven with curbless rein
Beyond the limit those same laws ordain,
When I behold these things befall.
The fountain of my tears can I restrain
No longer, when I see Antigone
Draw nigh the bridal bower where all
Sleep everlastingly.

*Enter* GUARDS *leading* ANTIGONE

[*Str.* 1

*An.* O people of my country, look on me
Thus treading the last way,
Who lift mine eyes unto the sun, and see
His latest ray,

The light that I shall look on nevermore;
But Hades, who doth give
Sleep unto all, leads me to Acheron's[1] shore
While yet I live.

Nor part nor lot in hymns of marriage-tide
Is mine: no songs lead on
My feet where love calls: I shall be the bride
Of Acheron.

*Cho.* Far-famous therefore, and glory-crowned
Shalt thou pass to the place of the dead deep-hidden:
No wasting disease hath dealt this blow,
Nor the bitter wage of the sword hast thou found;
But alive, as none other of mortals, unbidden
By dooming of law save thine own, dost thou go
Hadesward-bound.

[*Ant.* 1

*An.* Nay, I have heard what fate most dolorous
Befell our Phrygian guest,
That Queen of Thebes,[2] daughter of Tantalus,[3]
On Sipylus' crest:

For stone, as clinging ivy-tendrils strain,
Grew o'er her, in a cell
Crushing her living! Never fails the rain,
As legends tell,

From that still-wasting form, nor snow: for aye
Down on her bosom weep
Her eyes:—a doom like hers leads me away
To my long sleep.

*Cho.* She!—she was a Goddess, of birth divine;
Mortal and born of mortals be we.
That the doom of a peer of the Gods should be thine
In thy death—high glory were this for thee!

[*Str.* 2

*An.* Glory in *such* death!—this is mockery!
By our fathers' Gods, forbear!

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[1] Acheron: one of the rivers of Hades; hence, Hades itself.

[2] Niobe: wife of Amphion, who boasted that her seven children were more beautiful than Leto's two, Apollo and Artemis. The gods slew her children and Niobe, in her grief, was changed into a stone fountain.

[3] Tantalus: a son of Zeus.

Taunt me, if taunt ye must, when dead I lie:
The living spare!

My city! sons of her whose wealth o'erflows—
Waters of Dirkê's Spring—
O Thebê, Chariot-queen, whose hallowed close
Thy towers enring!—

Witnesses are ye how no friends lament
Me, whom a tyrannous doom,
Named Law, sends to the dungeon-cell rock-pent
Of my strange tomb!

Alas for me! For me is no place left
With those on earth who tread,
Nor may I sojourn with the life-bereft,
Who am not dead!

*Cho.* Rushing in utter-reckless daring thou
Hast dashed thy foot against high Justice' throne,
Hast fall'n—a fearful fall! Child, haply now
Thou for thy father's trespass dost atone.

[*Ant.* 2

*An.* There wakes my sorest grief again! My wail
For a father I renew,
And for the Line of Labdakus' bitter bale,
Which is mine too.

Woe for the bed accurst!—the spousal-tide
Whereon that wretched one,
My mother, couched her at my father's side,
Who was her son!

Ah me, the pity of their lot who bare
Me of the stricken heart!
To them, accurst, unwed, their home to share,
Thus I depart!

Alas, O brother mine, who in thy bride
Didst wed with ill-starred strife!
Thou, by this deed whereby thyself hast died,
Hast reft my life.

*Cho.* The claim of kin—to reverence this is just:
Yet may defiance of authority
Not be passed over of him who holds in trust
Its power. Thine own self-will hath ruined thee.

*An.* All unbewept am I: no man befriends me!
The path waits—there no bridal-chant attends me,
As I am haled forth—oh unhappy-souled!
No longer—woe is me!—may I behold
Yon lamp of life, the Sun-god's sacred eye!
None for my fate weeps: not a friend is nigh
To heave one sigh!

*Enter* KREON

*Kre.* Know ye, from dirge and wail, to stave off death,
Never would one cease, might he still chant on.
Hence lead her with all speed, and fold her round,
As I bade, with that cavern-sepulchre.
There lone and desolate leave her, to make choice
Of dying, or living in such bower entombed.
Touching this maiden clear of guilt are we;
And home on earth shall she have nevermore.

*An.* O tomb, O bride-bower, habitation hewn
Deep, everlasting dungeon, whither I
Pass to mine own, whereof Persephone
Hath welcomed home the more part[1] midst her dead,
Of whom the latest I, by fate most foul
Of all, pass down, ere life's due course be run!
Yet do I go in sure and certain hope
Of welcome from my sire, welcome from thee,
Mother, from thee dear welcome, brother mine!

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[1] the more part: her kindred; especially her father, mother, and brother.

For when ye died mine own hands washed your clay;
For burial I adorned you, and I poured
Your grave-libations. Now, Polyneikes, I
Thy corpse have tended—and my meed is this!
[Yet all true hearts that service will commend:[1]
For, had I been the mother of sons slain,
Or if my spouse lay dead, corruption's prey,
In Thebes' defiance I had not chosen this task.
Of reverence for what law do I say this?—
Mine husband dead, I might have had a second,
And, in a lost child's place, another child:
But, sire and mother both in Hades hid,
None lives of whom a brother now might spring.
Yet I, who by this law have honoured thee
Most chiefly, am by Kreon judged to have sinned
With treasonous presumption, brother mine!
Ay, now by menial hands he hales me thus,
Who, loveless, spouseless, must forego all hope
Of wedded joys or children at my knee.
But thus of friends forlorn, the evil-starred,
Living I pass to caverns of the dead.]
And yet what law of Heaven have I transgressed?
Why should I look—woe's me!—henceforth to Gods?
Unto what champion shall I cry?—for lo,
I, who feared God, receive the wage of sin!
Therefore, if in the Gods' eyes this be right,
Conscience through suffering shall convict me of sin:
But, if these err, may sufferings visit them
As many as they unjustly deal to me!

*Cho.* Still the same storm-winds of the soul
Sweep through her, and her words control.

*Kre.* Words, words!—these who delay to hale
Her hence, their sluggishness shall wail!

*An.* Ah me! that utterance tells how near
Death draweth—lo, his feet are here!

*Kre.* No word of cheer nor hope have I.
Thy fate is sealed: the end is nigh.

*An.* O towers of Thebê, ancestral city!
Gods, far-off Fathers of Oedipus' line!
I am haled to my death—I delay not nor falter.
See, princes, the victim dragged to the altar!
Last child of your Kings, with the Right should I palter?
See the doom of a tyrant, a doom without pity
On me, who have honoured the Laws Divine!
[GUARDS *lead away* ANTIGONE

[*Str.* 1
*Cho.* Not thou art the first—thus Danaë[2] suffered, the beautiful maiden
Who changed for the brass-knit walls of a tower the light of the sky:
In a sepulchre-cell was she buried: her neck was with doom's yoke laden:
Yet she came, O my daughter, my daughter, of lineage proud and high;

And she warded the seed that was sent of Zeus in gold down-raining;—
Ah, what availed it? Awful is Fate's mysterious might!
Not in wealth, not in girdling towers, not in courage battleward-straining
Is a refuge therefrom, nor in dark ships' billow-buffeted flight.

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[1] There is a general consensus of opinion among scholars that ll. 894–902 certainly, and probably 894–910, were never written by Sophocles.

[2] Danaë: a maiden who though imprisoned in a brass tower, was visited by Zeus in the form of a shower of gold, and became the mother of the hero Perseus.

[*Ant.* 1

And the King of Edonians, scion of Dryas,[1] when fierce rage rent him,
Railing in passion of wrath, withstood Dionysus' sway;
But the God brought him under the yoke: in a cavern-dungeon he pent him;
So the flower of his frenzy withered; he foamed his fury away.

So learned he to know how mighty a God his mad provocation
Had wakened to vengeance, stirred by the taunts of his gibing tongue,
Who was fain to have quenched the fire of the Bacchanals' inspiration,
And angered the Muses, and hushed the flutes in their ears that had rung.

[*Str.* 2

And hard by the Dark Rocks' gorge, where the surge of the Twin Seas swelleth,
Are the Bosporus-shores, and Salmydessus the burg of Thrace:
There, gloating o'er horrors, the War-god, beside that city who dwelleth,
Beheld the accursèd outrage, the rents in the eyeless face,[2]

Looked on the sons of a king, to the heaven they could see not appealing
For vengeance upon that she-wolf step-dame, whose blood-stained hand
Smote darkness into their eyeballs, in malice of jealousy dealing
The stroke with the shuttle's point, the woman-warrior's brand!

[*Ant.* 2

Pining in misery there through the long days night-enfolden,
Wailed o'er their pitiful doom those utter-wretched ones
Whose mother was bride unto grief, yet drew her descent from the olden
House of the princes of Athens, even Erechtheus' Sons.

Child of the Gods, she was nursed in the far-off caverns sounding
With the rush of the blasts of her father the Northwind evermore,
And swift as a steed unstumbling over the hills went bounding:—
Yet, O my daughter, on her the grey Fates heavily bore.

*Enter* TEIRESIAS

*Teiresias.* Princes of Thebes, we have come by ways where twain
Saw through the eyes of one, since by the blind
With a guide's help this path must needs be trod.
*Kre.* What are thy tidings, old Teiresias?
*Tei.* That will I tell: thou to the seer give heed.
*Kre.* Never I wont to spurn thy counsels yet.
*Tei.* Therefore hast thou this city helmed aright.
*Kre.* I, who have proved their blessings, bear them witness.
*Tei.* Take heed: again thou treadest fate's sharp edge.
*Kre.* What now? I shudder at thine utterance!
*Tei.* Hear thou the tokens of mine art, and learn:—
Upon mine ancient seat of augury
Sitting—whereto all manner of fowl resort—
An unfamiliar cry of birds I heard
Clanging with evil frenzy, unmeaning shrieks,
And knew they tare each other in deadly strife
Of talons, as the wing-whir plainly told.
Straightway in dread did I essay to test
Burnt-offerings on the altars; but no flame
Shone from the sacrifice, but o'er the embers
The clammy moisture from the thighs oozed out,
And smoked, and sputtered: the gall-bladder burst
Spraying through air: melted the thighs away,
Till bare the bones lay of the enfolding fat.

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[1] **scion of Dryas:** Lycurgus, who attacked Bacchus. The god drove him mad, and in a frenzy he killed his own son.

[2] **eyeless face:** Erechtheus's daughter Cleopatra bore two sons to Phineus, king of Thrace. Later Phineus divorced and imprisoned her in order to marry Idaea, at whose instigation he also blinded his two sons. In revenge the gods sent the Harpies to torment Phineus.

Such things at yonder lad's mouth did I learn—
Marred auguries of rites that darkly boded—
For this lad guideth me, and others I.
'Tis through thy purpose Thebes is stricken thus.
Our altars and our hearths are tainted all
By birds and hounds with flesh of ravin torn
From Oedipus' ill-starred son who lieth dead.
Wherefore the Gods no more accept from us
The sacrificial prayer, nor flame of thighs;
Nor any bird outshrieketh bodeful cries:
They are gorged with fat of blood of a slain man.
Hereby, my son, be warned. To err is still
The common frailty of all human-kind:
But, when we err, not senseless that man is,
Nor all unblest, who in his fall doth heal
The wrong, and is not fixed in stubbornness.
Lo, wilfulness is but stark witlessness.
Nay, yield the dead his right; stab not the slain.
What prowess lies in slaying twice the dead?
I give good counsel for thy good. To hear
Good counsel for one's profit given, is joy.
*Kre.* Ancient, all ye, as archers at a mark,
Aim shafts at me. Yea, I am practised on
By your seer-trickery! Traitors of your craft
Long since have sold me, as one shipped o'ersea!
Ay, get you gain!—all Sardis' silver-gold
Buy, if ye will, and all fine gold of Ind:—
Yet never shall ye hide him in the tomb,
Not though Zeus' eagles choose, still as they rend,
To bear his flesh unto the throne of Zeus!
Not even so, for dread of such pollution,
Will I let bury him: for well I know
There is no man that can defile the Gods.
But, old Teiresias, men exceeding shrewd
Fall shamefully when, for the sake of gain,
They utter shameful but fair-seeming words.
*Tei.* Out on it!
Knows any man, considers any man—
*Kre.* What thing? What hackneyed saw art uttering now?
*Tei.* How far of all possessions best is prudence?
*Kre.* As far, I trow, as folly is man's worse bane.
*Tei.* Yet thou of this soul-malady art full.
*Kre.* I scorn to bandy railing with a seer!
*Tei.* Yet sayest thou I falsely prophesy.
*Kre.* Ay!—covetous is all the tribe of seers.
*Tei.* The tribe of despots loveth shameful gain.
*Kre.* Dost know thou speakest evil of dignities?
*Tei.* I know: through me thou hast saved and rulest Thebes.
*Kre.* Wise seer art thou; but lov'st unrighteousness.
*Tei.* Thou'lt force things from mine heart best left unvoiced.
*Kre.* Unpack thine heart—but not for gain's sake speak!
*Tei.* I am little like to speak for gain—*thy* gain.
*Kre.* Know, thou shalt not make traffic of my mind.
*Tei.* Nay then, know well thou shalt not see fulfilled
Yet many courses of the on-racing sun,
Ere thou, even thou, shalt give a corpse, the fruit
Of thine own loins, in recompense for corpses,
Because thou hast hurled down one from life to death,
And given her soul a home of shame, the grave;
And here withholdest one from Gods of Death
Tombless, unhonoured, an unhallowed corpse.
In such nor thou, nor Gods of upper air

Have part: they are outraged in this thing by thee.
For this the Avengers, whose destroying feet
Track guilt, the Erinyes[1] of the Gods and Hades,
Lurk to entrap thee in the selfsame curse.
Look, ay, look keenly if for bribes of gold
I say this! Yet a little while, and wail
Of man and maid shall prove it in thine halls.
More—stirred to hate are all the states which hear
Of torn flesh of their sons by dogs entombed,
Or savage beasts, or swooping birds, which bear
The unhallowed savour to their city-hearths.
Such shafts—for thou dost gall me—archer-like
In wrath I have shot at thee, fixed in thine heart
To stand, whose smart thou never shalt escape.
Child, lead me back unto mine home, that he
May vent his petulance on younger men,
And learn to keep a quieter tongue, a purpose
Of heart more wise than that he harboureth now. [*Exit*

*Cho.* King, he is gone, with bodings terrible.
And this I know—since I for raven locks
First girt my temples with this wreath of snow,
Ne'er hath he prophesied a lie to Thebes.
*Kre.* This know I too: sore troubled is mine heart.
Hard, hard it is to yield: yet to defy
And dash one's soul on ruin is terrible.
*Cho.* Thou needest prudence here, Menoikeus' son.
*Kre.* What, O what must I do? Tell: I obey.
*Cho.* Go, from her rock-hewn dungeon set thou free
The maid, and o'er the dead man raise a tomb.
*Kre.* Dost thou commend this? Wouldst thou have me yield?
*Cho.* Yea, King, with all speed. Swift-foot from the Gods
The curse comes to cut short the infatuate-souled.
*Kre.* Woe's me! I bow mine heart, sore loth, to do it!
No man may wage unequal war with Fate.
*Cho.* Go then, do this: to others leave it not.
*Kre.* Thus, as I am, I go. Hence, servants, hence—
Ye present bid the absent—take in hand
Axes, and haste ye to that far-seen spot.
And I, since thus my purpose hath been changed,
Who bound, myself will go and set her free.
I fear me, best it is that one observe
The laws established, yea, to his life's end. [*Exit*

[*Str.* 1

*Cho.* O thou of many names,[2] the Bride Kadmeian[3]
By thee was glorified,
Scion of Him who o'er the empyrean
Dashes his thunder-tide;
Thou o'er Italia keepest watch and ward;
Thou reignest where, 'twixt sea and mountain-wall
Bosomed, Eleusis[4] lies, the world's guest-hall
Hallowed of Dêo: thou art Thebê's Lord—
This mother-city of the Bacchanal
Reared where Ismenus'[5] streams soft slide and fall—
Lord of the sacred soil where long of yore
Sown were the Dragon's teeth that warrior-harvest bore.[6]

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[1] **Erinyes:** Furies.

[2] **of many names:** Bacchus (Dionysus).

[3] **Bride Kadmeian:** Semele, daughter of Cadmus, and mother of Bacchus by Zeus. She asked to see Zeus in his splendor, and was destroyed by the lightning of the vision.

[4] **Eleusis:** a city in Attica, where were celebrated the great Eleusinian Mysteries in honor of Bacchus.

[5] **Ismenus:** a river flowing through Thebes.

[6] **Sown . . . bore.** Cadmus founded Thebes by sowing dragon teeth from which armed men sprang.

[*Ant.* 1

On yon twin-crested ridge[1] the torch-flame, glancing
Through tossing smoke-veil, sees
Thy glory, where Korykian Nymphs are dancing,
Thy Bacchant votaries:
Thou art beholden of Castalia's[2] spring:
From Nysa's[3] slopes that ivy-tendrils screen,
From shores with vines of myriad cluster green
Thou comest in thy triumph-wandering:
Around thee sweeps from hill and wild ravine
The unearthly Mænad-chant[4] upsoaring keen,
As floats the glory of thy presence down
The splendour-gleaming ways of Thebes, thy cradle-town.

[*Str.* 2

Thou giv'st her place of pride
Above all burgs, beside
Thy mother levin-stricken.[5]
Come now!—upon us thicken
Fierce plagues from heaven that smite—
In tempest-footed flight
Come o'er Parnassus' height
To cleanse us and requicken!—
Come o'er the moaning tide!

[*Ant.* 2

Come, Leader of the choir
Of stars whose breath is fire,
Lord of songs nightlong-pealing,
Zeus' Son! For Thebê's healing
Appear to us, O King,
Girt with thy Thyiad-ring[6]
Whose dances round thee swing,
Mad dances nightlong-reeling,
Fulfiller of desire!

*Enter* MESSENGER

*Messenger.* Dwellers by Kadmus'[7] and Amphion's[8] halls,
I dare not speak of any mortal's life
As blest or unblest, how it stand soe'er.[9]
Fortune exalteth, fortune casteth down
The fortunate and unfortunate evermore:
No seer can say things stablished shall abide.
Kreon, meseemed, was enviable once:
From foes did he deliver Kadmus' soil:
He grasped unchallenged lordship of the land;
He helmed her: he had seed of princely sons.
Now lost is all! Ah, when life's pleasures fleet
From man's grasp, I account not that he lives—
Nay, 'tis a man's corpse prisoning a soul!
Wealth in a palace have thou, an thou wilt,
And live in royal state: but if to these
Happiness lack, the rest I count not worth
The shadow of smoke to a man, compared with heartsease.

*Cho.* What tale of woes of princes bringest thou?

*Mes.* Dead are they, by the living done to death.

*Cho.* Who is the slayer? Who lies slain? Say on!

*Mes.* Haimon is dead! Self-slain in blood he lies.

*Cho.* Slain by his father's hand, or by his own?

*Mes.* His own—wroth with his sire for that death-sentence.

*Cho.* O prophet, how thy word is brought to pass!

*Mes.* So stands it. Now give counsel for the rest.

*Cho.* Lo, I behold forlorn Eurydike
Nigh, Kreon's wife. She cometh forth the halls
At tidings of her son, or by mere chance.

*Enter* EURYDIKE

*Eurydike.* Citizens all, I heard but now your speech,
As nigh the doors I drew, to go forth thence

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[1] **twin-crested ridge:** Mt. Parnassus, the mountain sacred to Apollo and the Muses, on whose slopes Bacchus was brought up by the nymphs in the Korykian (Corycian) cave.

[2] **Castalia:** fountain on Mt. Parnassus.

[3] **Nysa:** an imaginary place, identified with the nurture of Bacchus.

[4] **Mænad-chant:** that sung by the Bacchantes.

[5] See note on line 1094.

[6] **Thyiad-ring:** group of Bacchantes.

[7] **Kadmus:** Cadmus.

[8] **Amphion:** the mythical founder of Thebes. The stones of the city wall moved into place at the sound of his lyre.

[9] Or, according to Jebb's interpretation:—
"Never will I call life of mortal blest
Or unblest, as continuing at one stay."

To supplicate in prayer our Goddess Pallas.
Yea, even as I shot back the bolts that bar
The door, a cry that wailed our house's woe
Thrilled through mine ears. Backward I reeled adread
Into mine handmaids' arms, and swooned away.
Whatso the tale was, tell it yet again.
I am well schooled to sorrow: I will hear.
*Mes.* I, dear my Queen, for I was there, will tell,
And of the truth will leave no word unsaid.
Why salve thy pain with words which shall be proved
But lies ere long? Ever is truth the best.
I went with thy lord forth to guide his steps
Up to the plain's verge, where unpitied still
Lay Polyneikes' body torn of dogs.
Unto the Highway-queen[1] and Pluto then
We prayed to turn from wrath to gracious mood,
Then bathed him with pure washing, and consumed
With fresh-plucked boughs all that was left of him.
A lofty grave-mound of his country's soil
We heaped. Then to the maiden's rock-paved cell,
The bridal-bower of Hades, passed we on.
But from afar one heard a voice that raised
A wild high shriek round that unhallowed bower,
And came and told his master Kreon this.
Then, as he drew more near, a wordless wail
Rang all around. He shrieked, he hurled on the air
A lamentable cry—"Ah, woe is me!
Oh my prophetic soul!—and have I fared
On the most ill-starred path that e'er I trod?
My son's voice greets me! Haste ye, serving-men,
Draw nigh: go even to the tomb, and look—
Pass through the grave-mound's rift, whence stones are wrenched,
To the cell's mouth, to wot if Haimon's voice
Be that I hear, or I be god-beguiled."
So, at the bidding of our desperate lord,
We looked, and in the tomb's most deep recess
Her we behold where by the neck she hung,
Throat-tangled in her girdle's fine-spun noose.
And Haimon clasped with clinging arms her waist,
Wailed for his bridal's ruin, lost in Hades,
Wailed for his sire's deeds, wailed his hapless love.
When Kreon saw, with great and bitter cry
He passed in to him, shrieked, and called on him—
"O woe is thee! What deed hast done? What purpose
Hadst thou? In what affliction art distraught?
Come forth, my son, in suppliance I implore!"
Glaring at him with wild-beast eyes, the son
Spat in his face, and answered nought, but clutched
His sword's cross-hilt, rushed on him, and had slain,
But that the sire fled. Then that ill-starred one,
Wroth with himself, plunged then and there the blade
Deep in his own side; and ere sense had swooned,
Embraced the maiden with his failing arm:
And, gasping out the last sharp gust of breath,
Dashed with the bloody spray her pallid face.
Clasping a corpse, a corpse he lies: in halls
Of Hades is his bridal consummated.
[*Exit* EURYDIKE *hastily*

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[1] Highway-queen: Hecate (Persephone).

Ay, he hath shown men how far rashness is
The greatest curse that unto man can cleave.
*Cho.* What wouldst divine herefrom?—the queen hath passed
From sight again, nought saying bad or good.
*Mes.* Yea, I too marvel: yet I feed on hope
That, hearing her son's death, she will not deign
To wail in Thebes' ears, but beneath her roof
Appoints her maids to raise the home's lament.
She is not void of wit, that she should err.
*Cho.* I know not. Ominous in mine eyes no less
Is utter hush than vainly-loud outcry.
*Mes.* Nay, I shall see, if haply she conceal
Some purpose locked within her frenzied heart;
For I will enter. Yea, thou sayest well—
Such utter hush is strangely ominous.
[*Exit* Messenger

*Cho.* Lo, yonder the King himself draweth near:
The burden he beareth makes all too clear.
No stranger's folly hath wrought herein—
If I dare thus speak—but his own mad sin.

*Enter* Kreon *with* Attendants *bearing the body of* Haimon

[*Str.* 1
*Kre.* Woe for the sins of a spirit with folly distraught, sins done
Wholly by stubbornness, death-laden sins!—O look ye hereon!
See us, the slayer, the murdered—of one blood, father and son!
Woe for me! woe for my headstrong counsels misery-fraught!
Woe for thee, child, who untimely hast perished, alas for thy lot!
Snapped is the thread of thy life—by my folly, not thine, was it wrought!
*Cho.* Woe's me! Meseems thou seest the right too late.

[*Str.* 2
*Kre.* Alas, to my grief have I learnt it! Down on mine head
Then, then from the hand of a God a blow was sped
Into cruelty's paths which thrust me—a soul-crushing blow
Trampling my joy underfoot in mine overthrow.
Alas for the travail of mortals that earns them nought but woe!

*Enter* Servant *from within*

*Servant.* My lord, like some possessor who hath gained
Yet more, meseems thou com'st. Thou bringest woes
In hand, and more shalt see thine halls within.
*Kre.* What is there yet worse? What woes yet remain?
*Serv.* Thy wife hath died—this dead man's very mother—
Woefully, by a death-stroke dealt but now.

[*Ant.* 1
*Kre.* Haven of Hades, by deaths unappeasable, why dost thou still
Deal to me death-blows? O thou who to me art a herald of ill,
What are these tidings of doom through my shuddering soul that thrill?
Woe and alas! thou hast stabbed with a new stroke him that was dead!
Speak yet again—what is this, the incredible thing thou hast said,
Speaking the blood of a wife on the corpse of a slain son shed?

*Palace doors open, disclosing the body of* Eurydike.

*Cho.* 'Tis full in view; no more in inner chambers.

[*Ant.* 2
*Kre.* Ah me, yet another horror mine eyes hath met!
What destiny—ah, what destiny waiteth me yet?
But now have I raised in mine arms my son—woe's me!
Yonder before me a second corpse do I see!
Alas for thee, hapless mother! Alas, my child, for thee!

*Serv.* There by the altar, pierced by its keen knife,
She closed her eyes in darkness, wailing loud
Megareus'[1] glorious fate, who died erewhile;
Thereafter Haimon's; last, on thee she hurled
Malisons, as the slayer of thy son.

[*Str.* 3

*Kre.* Woe's me and alas! I am horror-thrilled!
Will no sword deal me a deep death-blow?
Woe unto me, the misery-filled,
Wretched and whelmed in abysses of woe!
*Serv.* Ay, all the guilt of latter deaths and former
Was by yon perished woman charged on thee.
*Kre.* Through what door murder-breached found she release?[2]
*Serv.* Her own hand thrust the knife into her heart
Soon as she heard her son's death loud-bewailed.
*Kre.* Ah me! to none other man's charge this deed
Shall be laid, that I should be clear of the guilt!
By me, wretched me, was thy dear blood spilt,
By me—yea, I own it! Ye henchmen, lead
With such speed as ye may, far hence lead me
Whom am even as one that hath ceased to be!
*Cho.* Well dost thou urge—if aught in ills be well.
Of present ills the briefest are the best.

[*Ant.* 3

*Kre.* Let it come! let that fairest of fates appear
That shall bring my days to their uttermost bourne;
Last, best of fates, let it now draw near,
That I look not henceforth on another morn!
*Cho.* All this is of the future. With the present
Have we to deal: the Unseen control the rest.
*Kre.* All I would ask, in that prayer I include.
*Cho.* Nay, pray for nought, seeing escape is none
For mortals from the doom predestinate.[3]

[*Ant.* 4

*Kre.* Hence lead me—a broken man am I.
I have slain thee, my son, have unwittingly slain,
And thee, my wife! Ah, whether of twain
I shall look to, I know not. Gone all awry
My purposes are. On mine head hath Fate
Crashed swiftly down with resistless weight. [*Exit*

*Cho.* Wouldst thou be blest? Be wisdom thy first aim,
The wisdom that reveres high Heaven's claim.[4]
Great swelling words of men of lofty eyes
Bring on them heavy stripes for penalties,
And lesson them in old age to be wise.
[*Exeunt* Omnes

## Euripides

The third Greek tragic poet, **Euripides** (480–406 B.C.), has been called the most modern of the Greek dramatists. He was born, according to legend, on the very day of the victory of Salamis. Unlike other contemporary dramatists, he did not take an active part in the stirring events of his time, but lived a retired life as a scholar and a recluse. He was less popular in his own day than his contemporary

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[1] See Introductory Note, page 10.

[2] **Through . . . release?** i. e., "How did she die?"—"And what was the manner of the violent deed by which she passed away?"—Jebb's translation.

[3] **Nay . . . predestinate.** "Pray thou no more; for mortals have no escape from destined woe."—Jebb's translation.

[4] **Be . . . claim.** "Wisdom is the supreme part of happiness; and reverence toward the gods must be inviolate."—Jebb's translation.

Sophocles, for he won the first prize only five times. Euripides died, a few months before Sophocles, in voluntary exile at the court of the king of Macedonia.

The bitterness of the decline of the glory of Greece seemed to be indelibly imprinted upon the character of Euripides. His plays are pessimistic: he sees the misery in life; to him the compensations of wisdom and of love are doubtful; he questions the man-made myths of the omnipotence of the gods, and seems to insist that God is a spirit; he is always seeking the meaning of death. He is a realist: his plays are studies of the passions of very real men and women in situations startlingly like those of modern life. Tragedy and comedy intermingle as in life. He is the first to introduce love stories and social problems as the basis of his plots. He satirizes women, yet understands them thoroughly, and might today be called a feminist.

In the dramas of Euripides the choral odes have ceased to have any clear bearing on the plot. They are beautiful lyrics — many of them nature songs — no longer arranged in set strophe and antistrophe, but used as musical interludes between the steps in the plot. Because he set a new fashion in the music and dancing he was criticized for introducing what to his audiences, accustomed to the stately formality of the older choruses, seemed almost as revolutionary as syncopated rhythm or "jazz." He also added prologues, in the form of long narratives explaining the events preceding the action of the play and giving a synopsis of the plot. Another innovation made by him was that of the epilogue, which is often in the form of a *deus ex machina* (literally, *a god from the machine*), who appeared at the end to solve the complications or to foretell the future destinies of the characters, or to end the play on a note of reconciliation and peace.

Later European drama was influenced by the works of Euripides more than by that of any other Greek dramatist, mainly through the translations and adaptions of his plays by the Roman philosopher Seneca (4 B.C.–65 A.D.).

The number of plays supposed to have been written by Euripides is placed as high as ninety-two. The nineteen extant are: *Alcestis; Medea; Hippolytus; Hecuba; Andromache; Ion; The Suppliants; Heracleidae* (*Sons of Hercules*)*; The Mad Hercules; Iphigenia among the Taurians; Troädes* (*The Trojan Women*)*; Helena; The Phoenician Women; Electra; Orestes; Iphigenia at Aulis; Bacchae* (*The Bacchanals*)*; The Cyclops* (the only surviving *satyr-play*)*; Rhesus.*

# THE
# TROJAN WOMEN

(Troädes)

EURIPIDES

Translated by Gilbert Murray, LL.D., D.Litt.

(*Presented at Athens in 415, B.C.*)

CHARACTERS IN THE PLAY

THE GOD POSEIDON
THE GODDESS PALLAS ATHENA
HECUBA, *Queen of Troy, wife of Priam, mother of Hector and Paris*
CASSANDRA, *daughter of Hecuba, a prophetess*
ANDROMACHE, *wife of Hector, Prince of Troy*
HELEN, *wife of Menelaüs, King of Sparta; carried off by Paris, Prince of Troy*

Talthybius, *herald of the Greeks*
Menelaüs, *King of Sparta, and, together with his brother Agamemnon, general of the Greeks*
Soldiers *attendant on Talthybius and Menelaüs*
Chorus *of Captive Trojan Women, young and old, maiden and married*

*The Troädes was first acted in the year 415, B.C. "The first prize was won by Xenocles, whoever he may have been, with the four plays Oedipus, Lycaön, Bacchae, and Athamas, a Satyr-play. The second, by Euripides with the Alexander, Palamêdês, Troädes and Sisyphus, a Satyr-play."*—Aelian, *Varia Historia*, ii. 8.

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*The scene represents a battlefield, a few days after the battle. At the back are the walls of Troy, partially ruined. In front of them, to right and left, are some huts, containing those of the Captive Women who have been specially set apart for the chief Greek leaders. At one side some dead bodies of armed men are visible. In front a tall woman with white hair is lying on the ground asleep.*

*It is the dusk of early dawn, before sunrise. The figure of the god* Poseidon *is dimly seen before the walls.*

*Poseidon.* Up from Aegean caverns, pool by pool
Of blue salt sea, where feet most beautiful
Of Nereïd maidens weave beneath the foam
Their long sea-dances, I, their lord, am come,
Poseidon of the Sea. 'Twas I whose power,
With great Apollo, builded tower by tower
These walls of Troy; and still my care doth stand
True to the ancient People of my hand;
Which now as smoke is perished, in the shock
Of Argive spears. Down from Parnassus' rock[1]
The Greek Epeios[2] came, of Phocian seed,
And wrought by Pallas' mysteries a Steed
Marvellous, big with arms; and through my wall
It passed, a death-fraught image magical.
  The groves are empty and the sanctuaries
Run red with blood. Unburied Priam lies
By his own hearth, on God's high altar-stair,
And Phrygian gold goes forth and raiment rare
To the Argive[3] ships; and weary soldiers roam
Waiting the wind that blows at last for home,
For wives and children, left long years away,
Beyond the seed's tenth fullness and decay,
To work this land's undoing.
                                        And for me,
Since Argive Hera conquereth, and she
Who wrought with Hera to the Phrygians' woe,
Pallas, behold, I bow mine head and go
Forth from great Ilion and mine altars old.
When a still city lieth in the hold
Of Desolation, all God's spirit there
Is sick and turns from worship.—Hearken where
The ancient River waileth with a voice
Of many women, portioned by the choice
Of war amid new lords, as the lots leap
For Thessaly, or Argos, or the steep
Of Theseus' Rock. And others yet there are,
High women, chosen from the waste of war

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[1] Parnassus: mountain in Phocis sacred to Apollo and the Muses.

[2] Epeios: builder of the Wooden Horse.

[3] Argive: Greek.

For the great kings, behind these portals hid;
And with them that Laconian Tyndarid,[1]
Helen, like them a prisoner and a prize.
And this unhappy one—would any eyes
Gaze now on Hecuba? Here at the Gates
She lies 'mid many tears for many fates
Of wrong. One child beside Achilles' grave
In secret slain, Polyxena the brave,
Lies bleeding. Priam and his sons are gone;
And, lo, Cassandra, she the Chosen One,
Whom Lord Apollo spared to walk her way
A swift and virgin spirit, on this day
Lust hath her, and she goeth garlanded
A bride of wrath to Agamemnon's bed.

[*He turns to go; and another divine Presence becomes visible in the dusk. It is the goddess* PALLAS ATHENA]

O happy long ago, farewell, farewell,
Ye shining towers and mine old citadel;
Broken by Pallas, Child of God, or still
Thy roots had held thee true.
*Pallas.* Is it the will
Of God's high Brother,[2] to whose hand is given
Great power of old, and worship of all Heaven,
To suffer speech from one whose enmities
This day are cast aside?
*Po.* His will it is:
Kindred and long companionship withal,
Most high Athena, are things magical.
*Pal.* Blest be thy gentle mood!—Methinks I see
A road of comfort here, for thee and me.
*Po.* Thou hast some counsel of the Gods, or word
Spoken of Zeus? Or is it tidings heard
From some far Spirit?
*Pal.* For this Ilion's sake,
Whereon we tread, I seek thee, and would make
My hand as thine.
*Po.* Hath that old hate and deep
Failed, where she lieth in her ashen sleep?
Thou pitiest her?
*Pal.* Speak first; wilt thou be one
In heart with me and hand till all be done?
*Po.* Yea; but lay bare thy heart. For this land's sake
Thou comest, not for Hellas?
*Pal.* I would make
Mine ancient enemies laugh for joy, and bring
On these Greek ships a bitter homecoming.
*Po.* Swift is thy spirit's path, and strange withal,
And hot thy love and hate, where'er they fall.
*Pal.* A deadly wrong they did me, yea within
Mine holy place: thou knowest?
*Po.* I know the sin
Of Ajax,[3] when he cast Cassandra down . . .
*Pal.* And no man rose and smote him; not a frown
Nor word from all the Greeks!
*Po.* And 'twas thine hand
That gave them Troy!
*Pal.* Therefore with thee I stand
To smite them.
*Po.* All thou cravest, even now
Is ready in mine heart. What seekest thou?
*Pal.* An homecoming that striveth ever more
And cometh to no home.
*Po.* Here on the shore
Wouldst hold them or amid mine own salt foam?
*Pal.* When the last ship hath bared her sail for home!
Zeus shall send rain, long rain and flaw of driven
Hail, and a whirling darkness blown from heaven;
To me his levin-light he promiseth
O'er ships and men, for scourging and hot death:
Do thou make wild the roads of the sea, and steep

---

[1] **Tyndarid:** Helen was the child of Zeus and Leda; but her human father was Tyndareus, an old Spartan king.

[2] **Poseidon:** the brother of Zeus.

[3] **sin of Ajax:** Ajax the Less, son of Oïleus, either ravished or attempted to ravish Cassandra while she was clinging to the Palladium or image of Pallas. It is one of the great typical sins of the Sack of Troy.

With war of waves and yawning of the deep,
Till dead men choke Euboea's curling bay.
So Greece shall dread even in an after day
My house, nor scorn the Watchers of strange lands!

*Po.* I give thy boon unbartered. These mine hands
Shall stir the waste Aegean; reefs that cross
The Delian pathways, jag-torn Myconos,
Scyros and Lemnos,[1] yea, and storm-driven
Caphêreus[2] with the bones of drownèd men
Shall glut him.—Go thy ways, and bid the Sire
Yield to thine hand the arrows of his fire.
Then wait thine hour, when the last ship shall wind
Her cable coil for home! [*Exit* PALLAS
How are ye blind,
Ye treaders down of cities, ye that cast
Temples to desolation, and lay waste
Tombs, the untrodden sanctuaries where lie
The ancient dead; yourselves so soon to die! [*Exit* POSEIDON

*The day slowly dawns:* HECUBA *wakes*

*Hecuba.* Up from the earth, O weary head!
This is not Troy, about, above—
Not Troy, nor we the lords thereof.
Thou breaking neck, be strengthenèd!

Endure and chafe not. The winds rave
And falter. Down the world's wide road,
Float, float where streams the breath of God;
Nor turn thy prow to breast the wave.

Ah woe! . . . For what woe lacketh here?
My children lost, my land, my lord.
O thou great wealth of glory, stored
Of old in Ilion, year by year
We watched . . . and wert thou nothingness?
What is there that I fear to say?
And yet, what help? . . . Ah, well-a-day,
This ache of lying, comfortless.

And haunted! Ah, my side, my brow
And temples! All with changeful pain
My body rocketh, and would fain
Move to the tune of tears that flow:
For tears are music too, and keep
A song unheard in hearts that weep.

[*She rises and gazes towards the Greek ships far off on the shore.*]

O ships, O crowding faces
Of ships,[3] O hurrying beat
Of oars as of crawling feet,
How found ye our holy places?
Threading the narrows through,
Out from the gulfs of the Greek,
Out to the clear dark blue,
With hate ye came and with joy,
And the noise of your music flew,
Clarion and pipe did shriek,
As the coilèd cords ye threw,
Held in the heart of Troy!

What sought ye then that ye came?
A woman, a thing abhorred:
A King's wife that her lord
Hateth: and Castor's[4] shame
Is hot for her sake, and the reeds
Of old Eurôtas[5] stir
With the noise of the name of her.
She slew mine ancient King,
The Sower of fifty Seeds,
And cast forth mine and me,
As shipwrecked men, that cling
To a reef in an empty sea.

Who am I that I sit
Here at a Greek king's door,
Yea, in the dust of it?
A slave that men drive before,
A woman that hath no home,
Weeping alone for her dead;
A low and bruisèd head,
And the glory struck therefrom.

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[1] **Myconos, Scyros and Lemnos:** islands in the Aegean Sea.
[2] **Caphêreus:** promontory of Euboea.
[3] **faces of ships:** Homeric ships had prows shaped and painted to look like birds' or beasts' heads.
[4] **Castor:** Helen's brother.
[5] **Eurôtas:** river in Sparta.

[*She starts up from her solitary brooding, and calls to the other Trojan Women in the huts.*]

O Mothers of the Brazen Spear,
And maidens, maidens, brides of shame,
Troy is a smoke, a dying flame;
Together we will weep for her:
I call ye as a wide-wing'd bird
Calleth the children of her fold,
To cry, ah, not the cry men heard
In Ilion, not the songs of old,
That echoed when my hand was true
On Priam's sceptre, and my feet
Touched on the stone one signal beat,
And out the Dardan music rolled;
And Troy's great Gods gave ear thereto.

*The door of one of the huts on the right opens, and the Women steal out severally, startled and afraid*

[*Str.* 1

*1st Woman.* How say'st thou? Whither moves thy cry,
Thy bitter cry? Behind our door
We heard thy heavy heart outpour
Its sorrow: and there shivered by
Fear and a quick sob shaken
From prisoned hearts that shall be free no more!

*Hec.* Child, 'tis the ships that stir upon the shore . . .
*2nd Woman.* The ships, the ships awaken!
*3rd Woman.* Dear God, what would they? Overseas
Bear me afar to strange cities?
*Hec.* Nay, child, I know not. Dreams are these,
~~Fears of the hope-forsaken.~~
*1st Woman.* Awake, O daughters of affliction, wake
And learn your lots! Even now the Argives break
Their camp for sailing!
*Hec.* Ah, not Cassandra! Wake not her
Whom God hath maddened, lest the foe
Mock at her dreaming. Leave me clear
From that one edge of woe.
O Troy, my Troy, thou diest here
Most lonely; and most lonely we
The living wander forth from thee,
And the dead leave thee wailing!

*One of the huts on the left is now open, and the rest of the* Chorus *come out severally. Their number eventually amounts to fifteen*

[*Ant.* 1

*4th Woman.* Out of the tent of the Greek king
I steal, my Queen, with trembling breath:
What means thy call? Not death; not death!
They would not slay so low a thing!
*5th Woman.* O, 'tis the ship-folk crying
To deck the galleys: and we part, we part!
*Hec.* Nay, daughter; take the morning to thine heart.
*5th Woman.* My heart with dread is dying!
*6th Woman.* An herald from the Greek hath come!
*5th Woman.* How have they cast me, and to whom
A bondmaid?
*Hec.* Peace, child: wait thy doom.
Our lots are near the trying.
*4th Woman.* Argos, belike, or Phthia shall it be,
Or some lone island of the tossing sea,
Far, far from Troy?
*Hec.* And I the agèd, where go I,
A winter-frozen bee, a slave
Death-shapen, as the stones that lie
Hewn on a dead man's grave:
The children of mine enemy
To foster, or keep watch before
The threshold of a master's door,
I that was Queen in Troy!

[*Str.* 2

*A Woman* [*to Another*]. And thou, what tears can tell thy doom?
*The Other.* The shuttle still shall flit and change
Beneath my fingers, but the loom,
Sister, be strange.
*Another* [*wildly*]. Look, my dead child! My child, my love,

The last look. . . .
*Another.* Oh, there cometh worse.
A Greek's bed in the dark. . . .
*Another.* God curse
That night and all the powers thereof!
*Another.* Or pitchers to and fro to bear
To some Pirênê[1] on the hill,
Where the proud water craveth still
Its broken-hearted minister.
*Another.* God guide me yet to Theseus' land,[2]
The gentle land, the famed afar. . .
*Another.* But not the hungry foam—
Ah, never!—
Of fierce Eurôtas, Helen's river,
To bow to Menelaus' hand,
That wasted Troy with war!
[*Ant.* 2
*A Woman.* They told us of a land high-born,[3]
Where glimmers round Olympus' roots
A lordly river, red with corn
And burdened fruits.
*Another.* Aye, that were next in my desire
To Athens, where good spirits dwell. . . .
*Another.* Or Aetna's breast, the deeps of fire
That front the Tyrian's Citadel:[4]
First mother, she, of Sicily
And mighty mountains: fame hath told
Their crowns of goodness manifold. . . .
*Another.* And, close beyond the narrowing sea,
A sister land, where float enchanted
Ionian summits, wave on wave,
And Crathis[5] of the burning tresses
Makes red the happy vale, and blesses
With gold of fountains spirit-haunted
Homes of true men and brave!

*Leader.* But lo, who cometh: and his lips
Grave with the weight of dooms unknown:
A Herald from the Grecian ships.
Swift comes he, hot-foot to be done
And finished. Ah, what bringeth he
Of news or judgment? Slaves are we,
Spoils that the Greek hath won!

TALTHYBIUS, *followed by some* SOLDIERS, *enters from the left*

*Talthybius.* Thou know'st me, Hecuba. Often have I crossed
Thy plain with tidings from the Hellene host.
'Tis I, Talthybius. . . . Nay, of ancient use
Thou know'st me. And I come to bear thee news.
*Hec.* Ah me, 'tis here, 'tis here,
Women of Troy, our long embosomed fear!
*Tal.* The lots are cast, if that it was ye feared.
*Hec.* What lord, what land. . . .
Ah me,
Phthia or Thebes, or sea-worn Thessaly?
*Tal.* Each hath her own. Ye go not in one herd.
*Hec.* Say then what lot hath any? What of joy
Falls, or can fall on any child of Troy?
*Tal.* I know: but make thy questions severally.
*Hec.* My stricken one must be
Still first. Say how Cassandra's portion lies.
*Tal.* Chosen from all for Agamemnon's prize!
*Hec.* How, for his Spartan bride
A tirewoman? For Helen's sister's pride?
*Tal.* Nay, nay: a bride herself, for the King's bed.
*Hec.* The sainted of Apollo? And her own
Prize that God promisèd
Out of the golden clouds, her virgin crown? . . .
*Tal.* He loved her for that same strange holiness.
*Hec.* Daughter, away, away,
Cast all away,
The haunted Keys,[6] the lonely stole's array
That kept thy body like a sacred place!

---

[1] **Pirênê:** the celebrated spring on the hill of Corinth. Drawing water was a typical employment of slaves.

[2] **Theseus' land:** Attica.

[3] **land high-born:** northern Thessaly.

[4] **Tyrian's Citadel:** Carthage.

[5] **Crathis:** Sybaris in South Italy, where the river Crathis had a red-gold color.

[6] **Keys:** Cassandra was Apollo's Key-bearer, holding the door of his Holy Place.

*Tal.* Is't not rare fortune that the King hath smiled
On such a maid?
*Hec.* What of that other child
Ye reft from me but now?
*Tal.* [*speaking with some constraint*]. Polyxena? Or what child meanest thou?
*Hec.* The same. What man now hath her, or what doom?
*Tal.* She rests apart, to watch Achilles' tomb.
*Hec.* To watch a tomb? My daughter? What is this?[1] . . .
Speak, Friend? What fashion of the laws of Greece?
*Tal.* Count thy maid happy! She hath naught of ill
To fear . . .
*Hec.* What meanest thou? She liveth still?
*Tal.* I mean, she hath one toil that holds her free
From all toil else.
*Hec.* What of Andromache,
Wife of mine iron-hearted Hector, where journeyeth she?
*Tal.* Pyrrhus, Achilles' son, hath taken her.
*Hec.* And I, whose slave am I,
The shaken head, the arm that creepeth by,
Staff-crutchèd, like to fall?
*Tal.* Odysseus, Ithaca's king, hath thee for thrall.

*Hec.* Beat, beat the crownless head:
Rend the cheek till the tears run red!
A lying man and a pitiless
Shall be lord of me, a heart full-flown
With scorn of righteousness:
O heart of a beast where law is none,
Where all things change so that lust be fed,
The oath and the deed, the right and the wrong,
Even the hate of the forkèd tongue:
Even the hate turns and is cold,
False as the love that was false of old!
O Women of Troy, weep for me!
Yea, I am gone: I am gone my ways.
Mine is the crown of misery,
The bitterest day of all our days.

*Lead.* Thy fate thou knowest, Queen: but I know not
What lord of South or North has won my lot.
*Tal.* Go, seek Cassandra, men! Make your best speed,
That I may leave her with the King, and lead
These others to their divers lords. . . . Ha, there!
What means that sudden light? Is it the flare
Of torches?

[*Light is seen shining through the crevices of the second hut on the right. He moves towards it.*]

Would they fire their prison rooms,
Or how, these dames of Troy?—'Fore God, the dooms
Are known, and now they burn themselves and die
Rather than sail with us! How savagely
In days like these a free neck chafes beneath
Its burden! . . . Open! Open quick! Such death
Were bliss to them, it may be; but 'twill bring
Much wrath, and leave me shamed before the King!
*Hec.* There is no fire, no peril: 'tis my child,
Cassandra, by the breath of God made wild.

*The door opens from within and* CASSANDRA *enters, white-robed and wreathed like a Priestess, a great torch in her hand. She is singing softly to herself and does not see the* HERALD *or the scene before her*

[*Str.*

*Cassandra.* Lift, lift it high:
Give it to mine hand!
Lo, I bear a flame
Unto God! I praise his name.
I light with a burning brand
This sanctuary.

---

[1] What is this? . . . : Hecuba takes the watching of a tomb to be some strange Greek custom, and does not seek to have it explained further.

Blessèd is he that shall wed,
And blessèd, blessèd am I
In Argos; a bride to lie
With a king in a king's bed.

Hail, O Hymen red,[1]
O Torch that makest one!
Weepest thou, Mother mine own?
Surely thy cheek is pale
With tears, tears that wail
For a land and a father dead.
But I go garlanded:
I am the Bride of Desire:
Therefore my torch is borne—
Lo, the lifting of morn,
Lo, the leaping of fire!—

For thee, O Hymen bright,
For thee, O Moon of the Deep,
So Law hath charged, for the light
Of a maid's last sleep.

[*Ant.*

Awake, O my feet, awake:
Our father's hope is won!
Dance as the dancing skies
Over him, where he lies
Happy beneath the sun! . . .
Lo, the Ring that I make . . .

[*She makes a circle round her with the torch, and visions appear to her.*]

Apollo! . . . Ah, is it thou?
O shrine in the laurels cold,
I bear thee still, as of old,
Mine incense! Be near to me now.

[*She waves the torch as though bearing incense.*]

O Hymen, Hymen fleet:
Quick torch that makest one! . . .
How? Am I still alone?
Laugh as I laugh, and twine
In the dance, O Mother mine:
Dear feet, be near my feet!

Come, greet ye Hymen, greet
Hymen with songs of pride:
Sing to him loud and long,
Cry, cry, when the song
Faileth, for joy of the bride!

O Damsels girt in the gold
Of Ilion, cry, cry ye,
For him that is doomed of old
To be lord of me!

*Lead.* O hold the damsel, lest her trancèd feet
Lift her afar, Queen, toward the Hellene fleet!

*Hec.* O Fire, Fire, where men make marriages
Surely thou hast thy lot; but what are these
Thou bringest flashing? Torches savage-wild
And far from mine old dreams.—Alas, my child,
How little dreamed I then of wars or red
Spears of the Greek to lay thy bridal bed!
Give me thy brand; it hath no holy blaze
Thus in thy frenzy flung. Nor all thy days
Nor all thy griefs have changed them yet, nor learned
Wisdom.—Ye women, bear the pine half burned
To the chamber back; and let your drownèd eyes
Answer the music of these bridal cries!

*She takes the torch and gives it to one of the women.*

*Cass.* O Mother, fill mine hair with happy flowers,
And speed me forth. Yea, if my spirit cowers,
Drive me with wrath! So liveth Loxias,[2]
A bloodier bride than ever Helen was
Go I to Agamemnon~~, Lord most high~~
Of Hellas! . . . I shall kill him, mother; I
Shall kill him~~, and lay waste his house~~ with fire
As he laid ours. My brethren and my sire
Shall win again . . .
[*Checking herself.*] But part I must let be,
And speak not. Not the axe that craveth me,

---

[1] **O Hymen red:** She addresses the Torch. The shadowy Marriage-god "Hymen" was a torch and a cry as much as anything more personal. As a torch he is the sign both of marriage and of death, of sunrise and of the consuming fire. The full moon was especially connected with marriage ceremonies.

[2] Loxias: Apollo.

And more than me; not the dark wanderings
Of mother-murder that my bridal brings,
And all the House of Atreus down, down, down . . .

Nay, I will show thee. Even now this town
Is happier than the Greeks. I know the power
Of God is on me: but this little hour,
Wilt thou but listen, I will hold him back!
One love, one woman's beauty, o'er the track
Of hunted Helen, made their myriads fall.
And this their King[1] so wise, who ruleth all,
What wrought he? Cast out Love that Hate might feed:
Gave to his brother his own child, his seed
Of gladness, that a woman fled, and fain
To fly for ever, should be turned again!
So the days waned, and armies on the shore
Of Simois[2] stood and strove and died. Wherefore?
No man had moved their landmarks; none had shook
Their wallèd towns.—And they whom Ares took,
Had never seen their children: no wife came
With gentle arms to shroud the limbs of them
For burial, in a strange and angry earth
Laid dead. And there at home, the same long dearth:
Women that lonely died, and aged men
Waiting for sons that ne'er should turn again,
Nor know their graves, nor pour drink-offerings,
To still the unslakèd dust. These be the things
The conquering Greek hath won!
But we—what pride,
What praise of men were sweeter?—fighting died
To save our people. And when war was red
Around us, friends upbore the gentle dead
Home, and dear women's hands about them wound
White shrouds, and here they sleep in the old ground
Belovèd. And the rest long days fought on,
Dwelling with wives and children, not alone
And joyless, like these Greeks.
And Hector's woe,
What is it? He is gone, and all men know
His glory, and how true a heart he bore.
It is the gift the Greek hath brought! Of yore
Men saw him not, nor knew him. Yea, and even
Paris hath loved withal a child of heaven:[3]
Else had his love but been as others are.
Would ye be wise, ye Cities, fly from war!
Yet if war come, there is a crown in death
For her that striveth well and perisheth
Unstained: to die in evil were the stain!
Therefore, O Mother, pity not thy slain,
Nor Troy, nor me, the bride. Thy direst foe
And mine by this my wooing is brought low.

*Tal.* [*at last breaking through the spell that has held him*]. I swear, had not Apollo made thee mad,
Not lightly hadst thou flung this shower of bad
Bodings, to speed my General o'er the seas!
'Fore God, the wisdoms and the greatnesses
Of seeming, are they hollow all, as things
Of naught? This son of Atreus, of all kings
Most mighty, hath so bowed him to the love
Of this mad maid, and chooseth her above

---

[1] King: Agamemnon, who made the war for the sake of his brother Menelaüs, and slew his daughter, Iphigenia, as a sacrifice at Aulis, to enable the ships to sail for Troy.

[2] Simois: river near Troy.

[3] a child of heaven: Helen.

All women! By the Gods, rude though I be,
I would not touch her hand!
Look thou; I see
Thy lips are blind, and whatso words they speak,
Praises of Troy or shamings of the Greek,
I cast to the four winds! Walk at my side
In peace! . . .And heaven content him of his bride!

[*He moves as though to go, but turns to* HECUBA, *and speaks more gently.*]

And thou shalt follow to Odysseus' host
When the word comes. 'Tis a wise queen[1] thou go'st
To serve, and gentle: so the Ithacans say.
*Cass.* [*seeing for the first time the* HERALD *and all the scene*]. How fierce a slave! . . . O Heralds, Heralds! Yea,
Voices of Death; and mists are over them
Of dead men's anguish, like a diadem,
These weak abhorrèd things that serve the hate
Of kings and peoples! . . .
To Odysseus' gate
My mother goeth, say'st thou? Is God's word
As naught, to me in silence ministered,
That in this place she dies?[2] . . . [*To herself.*] No more; no more!
Why should I speak the shame of them, before
They come? . . . Little he knows, that hard-beset
Spirit,[3] what deeps of woe await him yet;
Till all these tears of ours and harrowings
Of Troy, by his, shall be as golden things.
Ten years behind ten years athwart his way
Waiting: and home, lost and unfriended . . .
Nay:
Why should Odysseus' labours vex my breath?
On; hasten; guide me to the house of Death,
To lie beside my bridegroom! . . .
Thou Greek King,
Who deem'st thy fortune now so high a thing,
Thou dust of the earth, a lowlier bed I see,[4]
In darkness, not in light, awaiting thee:
And with thee, with thee . . . there, where yawneth plain
A rift of the hills, raging with winter rain,
Dead . . . and out-cast . . . and naked . . . It is I
Beside my bridegroom: and the wild beasts cry,
And ravin on God's chosen!

[*She clasps her hands to her brow and feels the wreaths.*]

O, ye wreaths!
Ye garlands of my God, whose love yet breathes
About me; shapes of joyance mystical;
Begone! I have forgot the festival,
Forgot the joy. Begone! I tear ye, so,
From off me! . . . Out on the swift winds they go.
With flesh still clean I give them back to thee,
Still white, O God, O light that leadest me!

[*Turning upon the* HERALD.]

Where lies the galley? Whither shall I tread?
See that your watch be set, your sail be spread.
The wind comes quick! . . . Three Powers[5]— mark me, thou!—
There be in Hell, and one walks with thee now!
Mother, farewell, and weep not! O my sweet
City, my earth-clad brethren, and thou great
Sire that begat us; but a space, ye Dead,
And I am with you: yea, with crownèd head

---

[1] wise queen: Penelope.

[2] That . . . dies? According to one tradition Hecuba threw herself off the ship into the sea; according to another she was stoned by the Greeks for her curses upon the fleet.

[3] Spirit: Odysseus

[4] lowlier bed I see: she foresees the murder of Agamemnon and herself by his wife Clytemnaestra.

[5] Three Powers: the Furies.

I come, and shining from the fires that feed
On these that slay us now, and all their seed!

[*She goes out, followed by* Talthybius *and the Soldiers;* Hecuba, *after waiting for an instant motionless, falls to the ground*

*Leader of Chorus.* The Queen, ye Watchers! See, she falls, she falls,
Rigid without a word! O sorry thralls,
Too late! And will ye leave her down-stricken,
A woman, and so old? Raise her again!

*Some women go to* Hecuba, *but she refuses their aid and speaks without rising.*

*Hec.* Let lie . . . the love we seek not is no love . . .
This ruined body! Is the fall thereof
Too deep for all that now is over me
Of anguish, and hath been, and yet shall be?
Ye Gods . . . Alas! Why call on things so weak
For aid? Yet there is something that doth seek,
Crying, for God, when one of us hath woe.
O, I will think of things gone long ago
And weave them to a song, like one more tear
In the heart of misery. . . . All kings we were;
And I must wed a king. And sons I brought
My lord King, many sons . . . nay, that were naught;
But high strong princes, of all Troy the best.
Hellas nor Troäs nor the garnered East
Held such a mother! And all these things beneath
The Argive spear I saw cast down in death,
And shore these tresses at the dead men's feet.
Yea, and the gardener of my garden great,
It was not any noise of him nor tale
I wept for; these eyes saw him, when the pale
Was broke, and there at the altar Priam fell
Murdered, and round him all his citadel
Sacked. And my daughters, virgins of the fold,
Meet to be brides of mighty kings, behold,
'Twas for the Greek I bred them! All are gone;
And no hope left, that I shall look upon
Their faces any more, nor they on mine.
And now my feet tread on the utmost line:
An old, old slave-woman, I pass below
Mine enemies' gates; and whatso task they know
For this age basest, shall be mine; the door,
Bowing, to shut and open. . . . I that bore
Hector! . . . and meal to grind, and this racked head
Bend to the stones after a royal bed;
Torn rags about me, aye, and under them
Torn flesh; 'twill make a woman sick for shame!
Woe's me; and all that one man's arms might hold
One woman, what long seas have o'er me rolled
And roll for ever! . . . O my child, whose white
Soul laughed amid the laughter of God's light,
Cassandra, what hands and how strange a day
Have loosed thy zone! And thou, Polyxena,
Where art thou? And my sons? Not any seed
Of man nor woman now shall help my need.
Why raise me any more? What hope have I
To hold me? Take this slave that once trod high
In Ilion; cast her on her bed of clay
Rock-pillowed, to lie down, and pass away
Wasted with tears. And whatso man they call
Happy, believe not ere the last day fall!

[*Str.*

*Cho.* O Muse, be near me now, and make
A strange song for Ilion's sake,
Till a tone of tears be about mine ears
And out of my lips a music break
For Troy, Troy, and the end of the years:
When the wheels of the Greek above me pressed,
And the mighty horse-hoofs beat my breast;
And all around were the Argive spears
A towering Steed[1] of golden rein—
O gold without, dark steel within!—
Ramped in our gates; and all the plain
Lay silent where the Greeks had been.
And a cry broke from all the folk
Gathered above on Ilion's rock:
"Up, up, O fear is over now!
To Pallas, who hath saved us living,
To Pallas bear this victory-vow!"
Then rose the old man from his room,
The merry damsel left her loom,
And each bound death about his brow
With minstrelsy and high thanks-giving!

[*Ant.*

O, swift were all in Troy that day,
And girt them to the portal-way,
Marvelling at that mountain Thing
Smooth-carven, where the Argives lay,
And wrath, and Ilion's vanquishing:
Meet gift for her that spareth not,
Heaven's yokeless Rider.[2] Up they brought
Through the steep gates her offering:
Like some dark ship that climbs the shore
On straining cables, up, where stood
Her marble throne, her hallowed floor,
Who lusted for her people's blood.

A very weariness of joy
Fell with the evening over Troy:
And lutes of Afric mingled there
With Phrygian songs: and many a maiden,
With white feet glancing light as air,
Made happy music through the gloom:
And fires on many an inward room
All night broad-flashing, flung their glare
On laughing eyes and slumber-laden.

*A Maiden.* I was among the dancers there
To Artemis, and glorying sang
Her of the Hills, the Maid most fair,
Daughter of Zeus: and, lo, there rang
A shout out of the dark, and fell
Deathlike from street to street, and made
A silence in the citadel:
And a child cried, as if afraid,
And hid him in his mother's veil.
Then stalked the Slayer from his den,
The hand of Pallas served her well!
O blood, blood of Troy was deep
About the streets and altars then:
And in the wedded rooms of sleep,
Lo, the desolate dark alone,
And headless things, men stumbled on.

And forth, lo, the women go,
The crown of War, the crown of Woe,
To bear the children of the foe
And weep, weep, for Ilion!

*As the song ceases, a chariot is seen approaching from the town, laden with spoils. On it sits a mourning Woman with a Child in her arms*

*Lead.* Lo, yonder on the heapèd crest
Of a Greek wain,[3] Andromachê,
As one that o'er an unknown sea
Tosseth; and on her wave-borne breast
Her loved one clingeth, Hector's child,
Astyanax . . . O most forlorn
Of women, whither go'st thou, borne
'Mid Hector's bronzen arms, and piled
Spoils of the dead, and pageantry
Of them that hunted Ilion down?
Aye, richly thy new lord shall crown
The mountain shrines of Thessaly!

---

[1] A towering Steed: the Wooden Horse.

[2] Rider: Athena.

[3] wain: wagon.

[*Str* 1.
*Andromache.* Forth to the Greek I go,
Driven as a beast is driven.
*Hec.* Woe, woe!
*And.* Nay, mine is woe:
Woe to none other given,
And the song and the crown therefor!
*Hec.* O Zeus!
*And.* He hates thee sore!
*Hec.* Children!
*And.* No more, no more
To aid thee: their strife is striven!

[*Ant.* 1
*Hec.* Troy, Troy is gone!
*And.* Yea, and her treasure parted.
*Hec.* Gone, gone, mine own
Children, the noble-hearted!
*And.* Sing sorrow. . . .
*Hec.* For me, for me!
*And.* Sing for the Great City,
That falleth, falleth to be
A shadow, a fire departed.

[*Str.* 2
*And.* Come to me, O my lover!
*Hec.* The dark shroudeth him over,
My flesh, woman, not thine, not thine!
*And.* Make of thine arms my cover!

[*Ant.* 2
*Hec.* O thou whose wound was deepest,
Thou that my children keepest,
Priam, Priam, O age-worn King,
Gather me where thou sleepest.

[*Str.* 3
*And.* [*her hands upon her heart*]. O here is the deep of desire,
*Hec.* (How? And is this not woe?)
*And.* For a city burned with fire;
*Hec.* (It beateth, blow on blow.)
*And.* God's wrath for Paris, thy son, that he died not long ago:

Who sold for his evil love
Troy and the towers thereof:
Therefore the dead men lie
Naked, beneath the eye
Of Pallas, and vultures croak
And flap for joy:
So Love hath laid his yoke
On the neck of Troy!

[*Ant.* 3
*Hec.* O mine own land, my home,
*And.* (I weep for thee, left forlorn,)
*Hec.* See'st thou what end is come?
*And.* (And the house where my babes were born.)
*Hec.* A desolate Mother we leave, O children, a City of scorn:

Even as the sound of a song
Left by the way, but long
Remembered, a tune of tears
Falling where no man hears,
In the old house, as rain,
For things loved of yore:
But the dead hath lost his pain
And weeps no more.

*Lead.* How sweet are tears to them in bitter stress,
And sorrow, and all the songs of heaviness.
*And.* Mother of him of old, whose mighty spear
Smote Greeks like chaff, see'st thou what things are here?
*Hec.* I see God's hand, that buildeth a great crown
For littleness, and hath cast the mighty down.
*And.* I and my babe are driven among the droves
Of plundered cattle. O, when fortune moves
So swift, the high heart like a slave beats low.
*Hec.* 'Tis fearful to be helpless. Men but now
Have taken Cassandra, and I strove in vain.
*And.* Ah, woe is me; hath Ajax come again?
But other evil yet is at thy gate.
*Hec.* Nay, Daughter, beyond number, beyond weight
My evils are! Doom raceth against doom.
*And.* Polyxena across Achilles' tomb
Lies slain, a gift flung to the dreamless dead.
*Hec.* My sorrow! . . . 'Tis but what Talthybius said:
So plain a riddle, and I read it not.
*And.* I saw her lie, and stayed this chariot;

And raiment wrapt on her dead limbs, and beat
My breast for her.
*Hec.* [*to herself*]. O the foul sin of it!
The wickedness! My child. My child! Again
I cry to thee. How cruelly art thou slain!
*And.* She hath died her death, and howso dark it be,
Her death is sweeter than my misery.
*Hec.* Death cannot be what Life is, Child; the cup
Of Death is empty, and Life hath always hope.
*And.* O Mother, having ears, hear thou this word
Fear-conquering, till thy heart as mine be stirred
With joy. To die is only not to be;
And better to be dead than grievously
Living. They have no pain, they ponder not
Their own wrong. But the living that is brought
From joy to heaviness, his soul doth roam,
As in a desert, lost, from its old home.
Thy daughter lieth now as one unborn,
Dead, and naught knowing of the lust and scorn
That slew her. And I . . . long since I drew my bow
Straight at the heart of good fame; and I know
My shaft hit; and for that am I the more
Fallen from peace. All that men praise us for,
I loved for Hector's sake, and sought to win.
I knew that alway, be there hurt therein
Or utter innocence, to roam abroad
Hath ill report for women; so I trod
Down the desire thereof, and walked my way
In mine own garden. And light words and gay
Parley of women never passed my door.
The thoughts of mine own heart . . . I craved no more . . .
Spoke with me, and I was happy. Constantly
I brought fair silence and a tranquil eye
For Hector's greeting, and watched well the way
Of living, where to guide and where obey.
And, lo! some rumour of this peace, being gone
Forth to the Greek, hath cursed me. Achilles' son,
So soon as I was taken, for his thrall
Chose me. I shall do service in the hall
Of them that slew . . . How? Shall I thrust aside
Hector's beloved face, and open wide
My heart to this new lord? Oh, I should stand
A traitor to the dead! And if my hand
And flesh shrink from him . . . lo, wrath and despite
O'er all the house, and I a slave!
One night,
One night . . . aye, men have said it . . . maketh tame
A woman in a man's arms. . . . O shame, shame!
What woman's lips can so forswear her dead,
And give strange kisses in another's bed?
Why, not a dumb beast, not a colt will run
In the yoke untroubled, when her mate is gone—
A thing not in God's image, dull, unmoved
Of reason. O my Hector! best beloved,
That, being mine, wast all in all to me,
My prince, my wise one, O my majesty
Of valiance! No man's touch had ever come
Near me, when thou from out my father's home
Didst lead me and make me thine. . . .
And thou art dead,
And I war-flung to slavery and the bread
Of shame in Hellas, over bitter seas!
What knoweth she of evils like to these,
That dead Polyxena, thou weepest for?
There liveth not in my life any more
The hope that others have. Nor will I tell
The lie to mine own heart, that aught is well
Or shall be well. . . . Yet, O, to dream were sweet!

*Lead.* Thy feet have trod the pathway of my feet,
And thy clear sorrow teacheth me mine own.

*Hec.* Lo, yonder ships: I ne'er set foot on one,
But tales and pictures tell, when over them
Breaketh a storm not all too strong to stem,
Each man strives hard, the tiller gripped, the mast
Manned, the hull baled, to face it: till at last
Too strong breaks the o'erwhelming sea: lo, then
They cease, and yield them up as broken men
To fate and the wild waters. Even so
I in my many sorrows bear me low,
Nor curse, nor strive that other things may be.
The great wave rolled from God hath conquered me.
But, O, let Hector and the fates that fell
On Hector, sleep. Weep for him ne'er so well,
Thy weeping shall not wake him. Honour thou
The new lord that is set above thee now,
And make of thine own gentle piety
A prize to lure his heart. So shalt thou be
A strength to them that love us, and—God knows,
It may be—rear this babe among his foes,
My Hector's child, to manhood and great aid
For Ilion. So her stones may yet be laid
One on another, if God will, and wrought
Again to a city! Ah, how thought to thought
Still beckons! . . . But what minion of the Greek
Is this that cometh, with new words to speak?

*Enter* Talthybius *with a band of* Soldiers. *He comes forward slowly and with evident disquiet*

*Tal.* Spouse of the noblest heart that beat in Troy,
Andromache, hate me not! 'Tis not in joy
I tell thee. But the people and the Kings
Have with one voice . . .

*And.* What is it? Evil things
Are on thy lips!

*Tal.* 'Tis ordered, this child . . . Oh,
How can I tell her of it?

*And.* Doth he not go
With me, to the same master?

*Tal.* There is none
In Greece, shall e'er be master of thy son.

*And.* How? Will they leave him here to build again
The wreck? . . .

*Tal.* I know not how to tell thee plain!

*And.* Thou hast a gentle heart . . . if it be ill,
And not good, news thou hidest!

*Tal.* 'Tis their will
Thy son shall die. . . . The whole vile thing is said
Now!

Sacrifice

*And.* Oh, I could have borne mine enemy's bed!

*Tal.* And speaking in the council of the host
Odysseus hath prevailed—

*And.* O lost! lost! lost! . . .
Forgive me! It is not easy . . .

*Tal.* . . . That the son
Of one so perilous be not fostered on
To manhood—

*And.* God; may his own counsel fall
On his own sons!

*Tal.* . . . But from this crested wall
Of Troy be dashed, and die. . . . Nay, let the thing
Be done. Thou shalt be wiser so. Nor cling
So fiercely to him. Suffer as a brave
Woman in bitter pain; nor think to have
Strength which thou hast not. Look about thee here!
Canst thou see help, or refuge anywhere?
Thy land is fallen and thy lord, and thou
A prisoner and alone, one woman; how
Canst battle against us? For thine own good

I would not have thee strive, nor make ill blood
And shame about thee. . . . Ah, nor move thy lips
In silence there, to cast upon the ships
Thy curse! One word of evil to the host,
This babe shall have no burial, but be tossed
Naked. . . . Ah, peace! And bear as best thou may,
War's fortune. So thou shalt not go thy way
Leaving this child unburied; nor the Greek
Be stern against thee, if thy heart be meek!
*And.* [*to the Child*]. Go, die, my best-beloved, my cherished one,
In fierce men's hands, leaving me here alone.
Thy father was too valiant; that is why
They slay thee! Other children, like to die,
Might have been spared for that. But on thy head
His good is turned to evil.
O thou bed
And bridal; O the joining of the hand,
That led me long ago to Hector's land
To bear, O not a lamb for Grecian swords
To slaughter, but a Prince o'er all the hordes
Enthroned of wide-flung Asia. . . . Weepest thou?
Nay, why, my little one? Thou canst not know.
And Father will not come; he will not come;
Not once, the great spear flashing, and the tomb
Riven to set thee free! Not one of all
His brethren, nor the might of Ilion's wall.
How shall it be? One horrible spring . . . deep, deep
Down. And thy neck . . . Ah God, so cometh sleep! . . .
And none to pity thee! . . . Thou little thing
That curlest in my arms, what sweet scents cling
All round thy neck! Belovèd; can it be
All nothing, that this bosom cradled thee
And fostered; all the weary nights, wherethrough
I watched upon thy sickness, till I grew
Wasted with watching? Kiss me. This one time;
Not ever again. Put up thine arms, and climb
About my neck: now, kiss me, lips to lips. . . .
O, ye have found an anguish that outstrips
All tortures of the East, ye gentle Greeks!
Why will ye slay this innocent, that seeks
No wrong? . . . O Helen, Helen, thou ill tree
That Tyndareus planted, who shall deem of thee
As child of Zeus? O, thou has drawn thy breath
From many fathers, Madness, Hate, red Death,
And every rotting poison of the sky!
Zeus knows thee not, thou vampire, draining dry
Greece and the world! God hate thee and destroy,
That with those beautiful eyes hast blasted Troy,
And made the far-famed plains a waste withal.
Quick! take him: drag him: cast him from the wall,
If cast ye will! Tear him, ye beasts, be swift!
God hath undone me, and I cannot lift
One hand, one hand, to save my child from death . . .
O, hide my head for shame: fling me beneath
Your galleys' benches! . . .

[*She swoons: then half-rising.*]

Quick: I must begone
To the bridal. . . . I have lost my child, my own!

*The Soldiers close round her.*

*Lead.* O Troy ill-starred; for one strange woman, one
Abhorrèd kiss, how are thine hosts undone!

*Tal.* [*bending over* Andromache *and gradually taking the Child from her*].
Come, Child: let be that clasp of love
Outwearied! Walk thy ways with me,
Up to the crested tower, above
Thy father's wall . . . Where they decree
Thy soul shall perish.—Hold him: hold!—
Would God some other man might ply
These charges, one of duller mould,
And nearer to the iron than I!

*Hec.* O Child, they rob us of our own,
Child of my Mighty One outworn:
Ours, ours thou art!—Can aught be done
Of deeds, can aught of pain be borne,
To aid thee?—Lo, this beaten head,
This bleeding bosom! These I spread
As gifts to thee. I can thus much.
Woe, woe for Troy, and woe for thee!
What fall yet lacketh, ere we touch
The last dead deep of misery?

[*The Child, who has started back from* Talthybius, *is taken up by one of the Soldiers and borne back towards the city, while* Andromache *is set again on the Chariot and driven off towards the ships.* Talthybius *goes with the Child*

[*Str.*1

*Cho.* In Salamis, filled with the foaming[1]
Of billows and murmur of bees,
Old Telamon stayed from his roaming,
Long ago, on a throne of the seas;
Looking out on the hills olive-laden,
Enchanted, where first from the earth
The grey-gleaming fruit of the Maiden
Athena had birth;
A soft grey crown for a city
Belovèd, a City of Light
Yet he rested not there, nor had pity,
But went forth in his might,
Where Heracles wandered, the lonely
Bow-bearer, and lent him his hands
For the wrecking of one land only,
Of Ilion, Ilion only,
Most hated of lands!

[*Ant.* 1

Of the bravest of Hellas he made him
A ship-folk, in wrath for the Steeds,
And sailed the wide waters, and stayed him
At last amid Simoïs' reeds;
And the oars beat slow in the river,
And the long ropes held in the strand,
And he felt for his bow and his quiver,
The wrath of his hand.
And the old king died; and the towers
That Phœbus had builded did fall,
And his wrath, as a flame that devours,
Ran red over all;
And the fields and the woodlands lay blasted,
Long ago. Yea, twice hath the Sire
Uplifted his hand and downcast it
On the wall of the Dardan, downcast it
As a sword and as fire.

[*Str.* 2

In vain, all in vain,
O thou 'mid the wine-jars golden
That movest in delicate joy,
Ganymêdês, child of Troy,
The lips of the Highest drain
The cup in thine hand upholden:
And thy mother, thy mother that bore thee,
Is wasted with fire and torn;
And the voice of her shores is heard,
Wild, as the voice of a bird,
For lovers and children before thee
Crying, and mothers outworn.
And the pools of thy bathing are perished,
And the wind-strewn ways of thy feet:
Yet thy face as aforetime is cherished
Of Zeus, and the breath of it sweet;
Yea, the beauty of Calm is upon it
In houses at rest and afar.
But thy land, He hath wrecked and o'erthrown it
In the wailing of war.

---

[1] The argument of the rather difficult lyric is: "This is not the first time Troy has been taken. Long ago Heracles made war against the old king, Laomedon, because he had not given him the immortal steeds that he promised. And Telamon joined him; Telamon who might have been happy in his island of Salamis, among the bees and the pleasant waters, looking over the strait to the olive-laden hills of Athens, the beloved City! And they took ship and slew Laomedon. Yea, twice Zeus has destroyed Ilion!

(Second part.) "Is it all in vain that our Trojan princes have been loved by the Gods? Ganymêdês pours the nectar of Zeus in his banquets, his face never troubled, though his motherland is burned with fire! And, to say nothing of Zeus, how can the Goddess of Morning rise and shine upon us uncaring? She loved Tithônus, son of Laomedon, and bore him up from us in a chariot to be her husband in the skies. But all that once made them love us is gone!"—Gilbert Murray.

[*Ant.* 2

O Love, ancient Love,
Of old to the Dardan given;
Love of the Lords of the Sky;
How didst thou lift us high
In Ilion, yea, and above
All cities, as wed with heaven!
For Zeus—O leave it unspoken:
But alas for the love of the Morn;
Morn of the milk-white wing,
The gentle, the earth-loving,
That shineth on battlements broken
In Troy, and a people forlorn!
And, lo, in her bowers Tithônus,
Our brother, yet sleeps as of old:
O, she too hath loved us and known us,
And the Steeds of her star, flashing gold,
Stooped hither and bore him above us;
Then blessed we the Gods in our joy.
But all that made them to love us
Hath perished from Troy.

*As the song ceases, the King* MENELAÜS *enters, richly armed and followed by a bodyguard of Soldiers. He is a prey to violent and conflicting emotions*

*Menelaüs.* How bright the face of heaven, and how sweet
The air this day, that layeth at my feet
The woman that I . . . Nay: 'twas not for her
I came. 'Twas for the man, the cozener
And thief, that ate with me and stole away
My bride. But Paris lieth, this long day,
By God's grace, under the horse-hoofs of the Greek,
And round him all his land. And now I seek . . .
Curse her! I scarce can speak the name she bears,
That was my wife. Here with the prisoners
They keep her, in these huts, among the hordes
Of numbered slaves.—The host whose labouring swords
Won her, have given her up to me, to fill
My pleasure; perchance kill her, or not kill,
But lead her home.—Methinks I have foregone
The slaying of Helen here in Ilion . . .
Over the long seas I will bear her back,
And there, there, cast her out to whatso wrack
Of angry death they may devise, who know
Their dearest dead for her in Ilion.—Ho!
Ye soldiers! Up into the chambers where
She croucheth! Grip the long blood-reeking hair,
And drag her to mine eyes . . . [*Controlling himself.*]
And when there come
Fair breezes, my long ships shall bear her home.

[*The Soldiers go to force open the door of the second hut on the left*

*Hec.* Thou deep Base of the World, and thou high Throne
Above the World, whoe'er thou art, unknown
And hard of surmise, Chain of Things that be,
Or Reason of our Reason; God, to thee
I lift my praise, seeing the silent road
That bringeth justice ere the end be trod
To all that breathes and dies.

*Men.* [*turning*]. Ha! who is there
That prayeth heaven, and in so strange a prayer?

*Hec.* I bless thee, Menelaüs, I bless thee,
If thou wilt slay her! Only fear to see
Her visage, lest she snare thee and thou fall!
She snareth strong men's eyes; she snareth tall
Cities; and fire from out her eateth up
Houses. Such magic hath she, as a cup
Of death! . . . Do I not know her? Yea, and thou,
And these that lie around, do they not know?

*The Soldiers return from the hut and stand aside to let* HELEN *pass between them. She comes through them, gentle and unafraid; there is no disorder in her raiment*

*Helen.* King Menelaüs, thy first deed might make
A woman fear. Into my chamber brake

Thine armèd men, and lead me wrathfully.
Methinks, almost, I know thou hatest me.
Yet I would ask thee, what decree is gone
Forth for my life or death?
*Men.* [*struggling with his emotion*]. There was not one
That scrupled for thee. All, all with one will
Gave thee to me, whom thou hast wronged, to kill!
*Hel.* And is it granted that I speak, or no,
In answer to them ere I die, to show
I die most wronged and innocent?
*Men.* I seek
To kill thee, woman; not to hear thee speak!
*Hec.* O hear her! She must never die unheard,
King Menelaüs! And give me the word
To speak in answer! All the wrong she wrought
Away from thee, in Troy, thou knowest not.
The whole tale set together is a death
Too sure; she shall not 'scape thee!
*Men.* 'Tis but breath
And time. For thy sake, Hecuba, if she need
To speak, I grant the prayer. I have no heed
Nor mercy—let her know it well—for her!
*Hel.* It may be that, how false or true soe'er
Thou deem me, I shall win no word from thee.
So sore thou holdest me thine enemy.
Yet I will take what words I think thy heart
Holdeth of anger: and in even part
Set my wrong and thy wrong, and all that fell.

[*Pointing to* HECUBA.]

She cometh first, who bare the seed and well
Of springing sorrow, when to life she brought
Paris: and that old King, who quenchèd not
Quick in the spark, ere yet he woke to slay,
The firebrand's image.[1]—But enough: a day
Came, and this Paris judged beneath the trees
Three Crowns of Life, three diverse Goddesses.[2]
The gift of Pallas was of War, to lead
His East in conquering battles, and make bleed
The hearths of Hellas. Hera held a Throne—
If majesties he craved—to reign alone
From Phrygia to the last realm of the West.
And Cypris,[3] if he deemed her loveliest,
Beyond all heaven, made dreams about my face
And for her grace gave me. And, lo! her grace
Was judged the fairest, and she stood above
Those twain.—Thus was I loved, and thus my love
Hath holpen Hellas. No fierce Eastern crown
Is o'er your lands, no spear hath cast them down.
O, it was well for Hellas! But for me
Most ill; caught up and sold across the sea
For this my beauty; yea, dishonourèd
For that which else had been about my head
A crown of honour. . . . Ah, I see thy thought;
The first plain deed, 'tis that I answer not,
How in the dark out of thy house I fled . . .
There came the Seed of Fire, this woman's seed;
Came—O, a Goddess great walked with him then—
This Alexander,[4] Breaker-down-of-Men,

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[1] the firebrand's image: Hecuba, just before Paris' birth, dreamed that she gave birth to a firebrand. The prophets, therefore, advised that the babe should be killed; but Priam disobeyed them.

[2] three diverse Goddesses: The Judgment of Paris is rather a choice between three possible lives than a mere beauty contest.

[3] Cypris: Aphrodite (Venus).

[4] Alexander: Paris.

This Paris, Strength-is-with-him; whom thou, whom—
O false and light of heart—thou in thy room
Didst leave, and spreadest sail for Cretan seas,
Far, far from me! . . . And yet, how strange it is!
I ask not thee; I ask my own sad thought,
What was there in my heart, that I forgot
My home and land and all I loved, to fly
With a strange man? Surely it was not I,
But Cypris, there! Lay thou thy rod on her,
And be more high than Zeus and bitterer,
Who o'er all other spirits hath his throne,
But knows her chain must bind him. My wrong done
Hath its own pardon. . . .
One word yet thou hast,
Methinks, of righteous seeming. When at last
The earth for Paris oped and all was o'er,
And her strange magic bound my feet no more,
Why kept I still his house, why fled not I
To the Argive ships? . . . Ah, how I strove to fly!
The old Gate-Warden could have told thee all,
My husband, and the watchers from the wall;
It was not once they took me, with the rope
Tied, and this body swung in the air, to grope
Its way toward thee, from that dim battlement.
Ah, husband still, how shall thy hand be bent
To slay me? Nay, if Right be come at last,
What shalt thou bring but comfort for pains past,
And harbour for a woman storm-driven:
A woman borne away by violent men:
And this one birthright of my beauty, this
That might have been my glory, lo, it is
A stamp that God hath burned, of slavery!
Alas! and if thou cravest still to be
As one set above gods, inviolate,
'Tis but a fruitless longing holds thee yet.
*Lead.* O Queen, think of thy children and thy land,
And break her spell! The sweet soft speech, the hand
And heart so fell: it maketh me afraid.
*Hec.* Meseems her goddesses first cry mine aid
Against these lying lips! . . . Not Hera, nay,
Nor virgin Pallas deem I such low clay,
To barter their own folk, Argos and brave
Athens, to be trod down, the Phrygian's slave,
All for vain glory and a shepherd's prize
On Ida! Wherefore should great Hera's eyes
So hunger to be fair? She doth not use
To seek for other loves, being wed with Zeus.
And maiden Pallas . . . did some strange god's face
Beguile her, that she craved for loveliness,
Who chose from God one virgin gift above
All gifts, and fleëth from the lips of love?
Ah, deck not out thine own heart's evil springs
By making spirits of heaven as brutish things
And cruel. The wise may hear thee, and guess all!
And Cypris must take ship—fantastical!
Sail with my son and enter at the gate
To seek thee! Had she willed it, she had sate
At peace in heaven, and wafted thee, and all
Amyclae[1] with thee, under Ilion's wall.
My son was passing beautiful, beyond
His peers; and thine own heart, that saw and conned
His face, became a spirit enchanting thee.

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[1] Amyclae: a town near Sparta; home of Tyndarus, Helen's father.

For all wild things that in mortality
Have being, are Aphroditê; and the name
She bears in heaven is born and writ of them.
Thou sawest him in gold and orient vest
Shining, and lo, a fire about thy breast
Leapt! Thou hadst fed upon such little things,
Pacing thy ways in Argos. But now wings
Were come! Once free from Sparta, and there rolled
The Ilian glory, like broad streams of gold,
To steep thine arms and splash the towers! How small,
How cold that day was Menelaüs' hall!
Enough of that. It was by force my son
Took thee, thou sayst, and striving. . . . Yet not one
In Sparta knew! No cry, no sudden prayer
Rang from thy rooms that night. . . . Castor was there
To hear thee, and his brother: both true men,
Not yet among the stars! And after, when
Thou camest here to Troy, and in thy track
Argos and all its anguish and the rack
Of war—Ah God!—perchance men told thee "Now
The Greek prevails in battle": then wouldst thou
Praise Menelaüs, that my son might smart,
Striving with that old image in a heart
Uncertain still. Then Troy had victories:
And this Greek was as naught! Always thine eyes
Watched Fortune's eyes, to follow hot where she
Led first. Thou wouldst not follow Honesty.
Thy secret ropes, thy body swung to fall
Far, like a desperate prisoner, from the wall!
Who found thee so? When wast thou taken? Nay,
Hadst thou no surer rope, no sudden way
Of the sword, that any woman honest-souled
Had sought long since, loving her lord of old?
Often and often did I charge thee; "Go,
My daughter; go thy ways. My sons will know
New loves. I will give aid, and steal thee past
The Argive watch. O give us peace at last,
Us and our foes!" But out thy spirit cried
As at a bitter word. Thou hadst thy pride
In Alexander's house, and O, 'twas sweet
To hold proud Easterns bowing at thy feet.
They were great things to thee! . . . And comest thou now
Forth, and hast decked thy bosom and thy brow,
And breathest with thy lord the same blue air,
Thou evil heart? Low, low, with ravaged hair,
Rent raiment, and flesh shuddering, and within—
O shame at last, not glory for thy sin;
So face him if thou canst! . . . Lo, I have done.
Be true, O King; let Hellas bear her crown
Of Justice. Slay this woman, and upraise
The law for evermore: she that betrays
Her husband's bed, let her be judged and die.
*Lead.* Be strong, O King; give judgment worthily
For thee and thy great house. Shake off thy long
Reproach; not weak, but iron against the wrong!
*Men.* Thy thought doth walk with mine in one intent.

'Tis sure; her heart was willing, when she went
Forth to a stranger's bed. And all her fair
Tale of enchantment, 'tis a thing of air! . . .

[*Turning furiously upon* Helen.]
Out, woman! There be those that seek thee yet
With stones! Go, meet them. So shall thy long debt
Be paid at last. And ere this night is o'er
Thy dead face shall dishonour me no more!
*Hel.* [*kneeling before him and embracing him*]. Behold, mine arms are wreathed about thy knees;
Lay not upon my head the phantasies
Of Heaven. Remember all, and slay me not!
*Hec.* Remember them she murdered, them that fought
Beside thee, and their children! Hear that prayer!
*Men.* Peace, agèd woman, peace! 'Tis not for her;
She is as naught to me.
[*To the Soldiers.*] . . . March on before,
Ye ministers, and tend her to the shore. . .
And have some chambered galley set for her,
Where she may sail the seas.
*Hec.* If thou be there,
I charge thee, let not her set foot therein!
*Men.* How? Shall the ship go heavier for her sin?
*Hec.* A lover once, will alway love again.
*Men.* If that he loved be evil, he will fain
Hate it! . . . Howbeit, thy pleasure shall be done.
Some other ship shall bear her, not mine own. . . .
Thou counsellest very well . . . And when we come
To Argos, then . . . O then some pitiless doom
Well-earned, black as her heart! One that shall bind
Once for all time the law on womankind
Of faithfulness! . . . 'Twill be no easy thing,
God knoweth. But the thought thereof shall fling
A chill on the dreams of women, though they be
Wilder of wing and loathèd more than she!
[*Exit, following* Helen, *who is escorted by the Soldiers*

[*Str.* 1
*Cho.* [*Some Women*]. And hast thou turned from the Altar of frankincense,
And given to the Greek thy temple of Ilion?
The flame of the cakes of corn, is it gone from hence,
The myrrh on the air and the wreathèd towers gone?
And Ida, dark Ida, where the wild ivy grows,
The glens that run as rivers from the summer-broken snows,
And the Rock, is it forgotten, where the first sunbeam glows,
The lit house most holy of the Dawn?[1]

[*Ant.* 1
*Others.* The sacrifice is gone and the sound of joy,
The dancing under the stars and the night-long prayer:
The Golden Images and the Moons of Troy,[2]
The twelve Moons and the mighty names they bear:
My heart, my heart crieth, O Lord Zeus on high,
Were they all to thee as nothing, thou thronèd in the sky,
Thronèd in the fire-cloud, where a City, near to die,
Passeth in the wind and the flare?

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[1] Mount Ida caught the rays of the sun in some special manner and distributed them to the rest of the world; and in this gleam of heavenly fire the God had his dwelling, which is now the brighter for the flames of his city going up like incense!—Gilbert Murray.

[2] Golden Images . . . Moons of Troy. Nothing definite is known of the Golden Images and the Moon-Feasts.

[*Str.* 2

*A Woman.* Dear one, O husband mine
Thou in the dim dominions
Driftest with waterless lips,
Unburied; and me the ships
Shall bear o'er the bitter brine,
Storm-birds upon angry pinions,
Where the towers of the Giants[1] shine
O'er Argos cloudily,
And the riders ride by the sea.

*Others.* And children still in the Gate
Crowd and cry,
A multitude desolate,
Voices that float and wait
As the tears run dry:
"Mother, alone on the shore
They drive me, far from thee:
Lo, the dip of the oar,
The black hull on the sea!
Is it the Isle Immortal,
Salamis, waits for me?
Is it the Rock that broods
Over the sundered floods
Of Corinth, the ancient portal
Of Pelops' sovranty?"

[*Ant.* 2

*A Woman.* Out in the waste of foam,
Where rideth dark Menelaüs,
Come to us there, O white
And jagged, with wild sea-light
And crashing of oar-blades, come,
O thunder of God, and slay us:
While our tears are wet for home,
While out in the storm go we,
Slaves of our enemy!

*Others.* And, God, may Helen be there,
With mirror of gold,
Decking her face so fair,
Girl-like; and hear, and stare,
And turn death-cold:
Never, ah, never more
The hearth of her home to see,
Nor sand of the Spartan shore,
Nor tombs where her fathers be,
Nor Athena's bronzen Dwelling,[2]
Nor the towers of Pitanê;[3]
For her face was a dark desire
Upon Greece, and shame like fire,
And her dead are welling, welling,
From red Simoïs to the sea!

TALTHYBIUS, *followed by one or two Soldiers and bearing the child* ASTYANAX *dead, is seen approaching*

*Lead.* Ah, change on change! Yet each one racks
This land with evil manifold;
Unhappy wives of Troy, behold,
They bear the dead Astyanax,
Our prince, whom bitter Greeks this hour
Have hurled to death from Ilion's tower.

*Tal.* One galley, Hecuba, there lingereth yet,
Lapping the wave, to gather the last freight
Of Pyrrhus' spoils for Thessaly. The chief
Himself long since hath parted, much in grief
For Pêleus' sake, his grandsire, whom, men say,
Acastus, Pelias' son, in war array
Hath driven to exile. Loath enough before
Was he to linger, and now goes the more
In haste, bearing Andromache, his prize.
'Tis she hath charmed these tears into mine eyes,
Weeping her fatherland, as o'er the wave
She gazed, and speaking words to Hector's grave.
Howbeit, she prayed us that due rites be done
For burial of this babe, thine Hector's son,
That now from Ilion's tower is fallen and dead.
And, lo! this great bronze-fronted shield, the dread
Of many a Greek, that Hector held in fray,
O never in God's name—so did she pray—
Be this borne forth to hang in Pêleus' hall
Or that dark bridal chamber, that the wall

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[1] **towers of the Giants:** the pre-historic castles of Tiryns and Mycenae.

[2] **Athena's bronzen Dwelling:** Temple on the acropolis of Sparta.

[3] **Pitanê:** One of the five divisions of Sparta.

May hurt her eyes; but here, in Troy o'erthrown,
Instead of cedar wood and vaulted stone,
Be this her child's last house. . . . And in thine hands
She bade me lay him, to be swathed in bands
Of death and garments, such as rest to thee
In these thy fallen fortunes; seeing that she
Hath gone her ways, and, for her master's haste,
May no more fold the babe unto his rest.
Howbeit, so soon as he is garlanded
And robed, we will heap earth above his head
And lift our sails. . . . See all be swiftly done,
As thou art bidden. I have saved thee one
Labour. For as I passed Scamander's stream
Hard by, I let the waters run on him,
And cleansed his wounds.—See, I will go forth now
And break the hard earth for his grave: so thou
And I will haste together, to set free
Our oars at last to beat the homeward sea

[*He goes out with his Soldiers, leaving the body of the Child in* HECUBA'S *arms*

*Hec.* Set the great orb of Hector's shield to lie
Here on the ground. 'Tis bitter that mine eye
Should see it. . . . O ye Argives, was your spear
Keen, and your hearts so low and cold, to fear
This babe? 'Twas a strange murder for brave men!
For fear this babe some day might raise again
His fallen land! Had ye so little pride?
While Hector fought, and thousands at his side,
Ye smote us, and we perished; and now, now,
When all are dead and Ilion lieth low,
Ye dread this innocent! I deem it not
Wisdom, that rage of fear that hath no thought. . . .
Ah, what a death hath found thee, little one!
Hadst thou but fallen fighting, hadst thou known
Strong youth and love and all the majesty
Of godlike kings, then had we spoken of thee
As of one blessèd . . . could in any wise
These days know blessedness. But now thine eyes
Have seen, thy lips have tasted, but thy soul
No knowledge had nor usage of the whole
Rich life that lapt thee round. . . . Poor little child!
Was it our ancient wall, the circuit piled
By loving Gods, so savagely hath rent
Thy curls, these little flowers innocent
That were thy mother's garden, where she laid
Her kisses; here, just where the bone-edge frayed
Grins white above—Ah heaven, I will not see!
Ye tender arms, the same dear mould have ye
As his; how from the shoulder loose ye drop
And weak! And dear proud lips, so full of hope
And closed for ever! What false words ye said
At daybreak, when he crept into my bed,
Called me kind names, and promised: "Grandmother,
When thou art dead, I will cut close my hair
And lead out all the captains to ride by
Thy tomb." Why didst thou cheat me so? 'Tis I,
Old, homeless, childless, that for thee must shed
Cold tears, so young, so miserably dead.
Dear God, the pattering welcomes of thy feet,
The nursing in my lap; and O, the sweet
Falling asleep together! All is gone.
How should a poet carve the funeral stone

To tell thy story true? "There lieth here
A babe whom the Greeks feared, and in their fear
Slew him." Aye, Greece will bless the tale it tells!
  Child, they have left thee beggared of all else
In Hector's house; but one thing shalt thou keep,
This war-shield bronzen-barred, wherein to sleep.
Alas, thou guardian true of Hector's fair
Left arm, how art thou masterless! And there
I see his handgrip printed on thy hold;
And deep stains of the precious sweat, that rolled
In battle from the brows and beard of him,
Drop after drop, are writ about thy rim.
  Go, bring them—such poor garments hazardous
As these days leave. God hath not granted us
Wherewith to make much pride. But all I can,
I give thee, Child of Troy.—O vain is man,
Who glorieth in his joy and hath no fears:
While to and fro the chances of the years
Dance like an idiot in the wind! And none
By any strength hath his own fortune won.

*During these lines several Women are seen approaching with garlands and raiment in their hands.*

*Lead.* Lo these, who bear thee raiment harvested
From Ilion's slain, to fold upon the dead.

*During the following scene* HECUBA *gradually takes the garments and wraps them about the Child.*

*Hec.* O not in pride for speeding of the car
Beyond thy peers, not for the shaft of war
True aimed, as Phrygians use; not any prize
Of joy for thee, nor splendour in men's eyes,
Thy father's mother lays these offerings
About thee, from the many fragrant things
That were all thine of old. But now no more.
One woman, loathed of God, hath broke the door
And robbed thy treasure-house, and thy warm breath
Made cold, and trod thy people down to death!

*Cho.* [*Some Women*]. Deep in the heart of me
  I feel thine hand,
Mother: and is it he
Dead here, our prince to be,
  And lord of the land?

*Hec.* Glory of Phrygian raiment, which my thought
Kept for thy bridal day with some far-sought
Queen of the East, folds thee for evermore.
  And thou, grey Mother, Mother-Shield that bore
A thousand days of glory, thy last crown
Is here. . . . Dear Hector's shield! Thou shalt lie down
Undying with the dead, and lordlier there
Than all the gold Odysseus' breast can bear,
The evil and the strong!

*Cho.* [*Some Women*]. Child of the Shield-bearer,
  Alas, Hector's child!
Great Earth, the All-mother,
Taketh thee unto her
  With wailing wild!

*Others.* Mother of misery,
  Give Death his song!
(*Hec.* Woe!) Aye and bitterly
(*Hec.* Woe!) We too weep for thee,
  And the infinite wrong!

*During these lines* Hecuba, *kneeling by the body, has been performing a funeral rite, symbolically staunching the dead Child's wounds.*

*Hec.* I make thee whole;
I bind thy wounds, O little vanished soul.
This wound and this I heal with linen white:
O emptiness of aid! . . . Yet let the rite
Be spoken. This and . . . Nay, not I, but he,
Thy father far away shall comfort thee!

*She bows her head to the ground and remains motionless and unseeing*

*Cho.* Beat, beat thine head:
Beat with the wailing chime
Of hands lifted in time:
Beat and bleed for the dead.
Woe is me for the dead!

*Hec.* O Women! Ye, mine own . . .

*She rises bewildered, as though she had seen a vision.*

*Lead.* Hecuba, speak!
Thine are we all. Oh, ere thy bosom break . .
*Hec.* Lo, I have seen the open hand of God;
And in it nothing, nothing, save the rod
Of mine affliction, and the eternal hate,
Beyond all lands, chosen and lifted great
For Troy! Vain, vain were prayer and incense-swell
And bulls' blood on the altars! . . . All is well.
Had He not turned us in His hand, and thrust
Our high things low and shook our hills as dust,
We had not been this splendour, and our wrong
An everlasting music for the song
Of earth and heaven!
Go, women: lay our dead
In his low sepulchre. He hath his meed
Of robing. And, methinks, but little care
Toucheth the tomb, if they that moulder there
Have rich encerëment. 'Tis we, 'tis we,
That dream, we living and our vanity!

[*The Women bear out the dead Child upon the shield, singing, when presently flames of fire and dim forms are seen among the ruins of the City*

*Cho.* [*Some Women*]. Woe for the mother that bare thee, child,
Thread so frail of a hope so high,
That Time hath broken: and all men smiled
About thy cradle, and, passing by,
Spoke of thy father's majesty.
Low, low thou liest!

*Others.* Ha! Who be these on the crested rock?
Fiery hands in the dusk, and a shock
Of torches flung! What lingereth still,
O wounded City, of unknown ill,
Ere yet thou diest?

*Tal.* [*coming out through the ruined Wall*]. Ye Captains that have charge to wreck this keep
Of Priam's City, let your torches sleep
No more! Up, fling the fire into her heart!
Then have we done with Ilion, and may part
In joy to Hellas from this evil land.
And ye—so hath one word two faces—stand,
Daughters of Troy, till on your ruined wall
The echo of my master's trumpet call
In signal breaks: then, forward to the sea,
Where the long ships lie waiting.
And for thee
O ancient woman most unfortunate,
Follow: Odysseus' men be here, and wait
To guide thee. . . . 'Tis to him thou go'st for thrall.
*Hec.* Ah, me! and is it come, the end of all,
The very crest and summit of my days?
I go forth from my land, and all its ways
Are filled with fire! Bear me, O aged feet,
A little nearer: I must gaze, and greet
My poor town ere she fall.
Farewell, farewell!

O thou whose breath was mighty on the swell
Of orient winds, my Troy! Even thy name
Shall soon be taken from thee. Lo, the flame
Hath thee, and we, thy children, pass away
To slavery . . . God! O God of mercy! . . . Nay:
Why call I on the Gods? They know, they know,
My prayers, and would not hear them long ago.
Quick, to the flames! O, in thine agony,
My Troy, mine own, take me to die with thee!

*She springs toward the flames, but is seized and held by the Soldiers.*

*Tal.* Back! Thou art drunken with thy miseries,
Poor woman!—Hold her fast, men, till it please
Odysseus that she come. She was his lot
Chosen from all and portioned. Lose her not!

[*He goes to watch over the burning of the City. The dusk deepens.*

*Cho.* [*Divers Women*]. Woe, woe, woe!
Thou of the Ages.[1] O wherefore fleëst thou,
Lord of the Phrygian, Father that made us?
'Tis we, thy children; shall no man aid us?
'Tis we, thy children! Seëst thou, seëst thou?

*Others.* He seëth, only his heart is pitiless;
And the land dies: yea, she,
She of the Mighty Cities perisheth citiless!
Troy shall no more be!

*Others.* Woe, woe, woe!
Ilion shineth afar!
Fire in the deeps thereof,
Fire in the heights above,
And crested walls of War!

*Others.* As smoke on the wing of heaven
Climbeth and scattereth,
Torn of the spear and driven,
The land crieth for death:
O stormy battlements that red fire hath riven,
And the sword's angry breath!

*A new thought comes to* Hecuba; *she kneels and beats the earth with her hands.*

[*Str.*

*Hec.* O Earth, Earth of my children; hearken! and O mine own,
Ye have hearts and forget not, ye in the darkness lying!
*Lead.* Now hast thou found thy prayer, crying to them that are gone.
*Hec.* Surely my knees are weary, but I kneel above your head;
Hearken, O ye so silent! My hands beat your bed!
*Lead.* I, I am near thee;
I kneel to thy dead to hear thee,
Kneel to mine own in the darkness; O husband, hear my crying!
*Hec.* Even as the beasts they drive, even as the loads they bear,
*Lead.* (Pain; O pain!)
*Hec.* We go to the house of bondage.
Hear, ye dead, O hear!
*Lead.* (Go, and come not again!)
*Hec.* Priam, mine own Priam,
Lying so lowly,
Thou in thy nothingness,
Shelterless, comfortless,
See'st thou the thing I am?
Know'st thou my bitter stress?
*Lead.* Nay, thou art naught to him!
Out of the strife there came,
Out of the noise and shame,
Making his eyelids dim,
Death, the Most Holy!

*The fire and smoke rise constantly higher.*

[*Ant.*

*Hec.* O high houses of Gods, belovèd streets of my birth,
Ye have found the way of the sword, the fiery and blood-red river!

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[1] Thou of the Ages: Zeus.

*Lead.* Fall, and men shall forget you!
Ye shall lie in the gentle earth.
*Hec.* The dust as smoke riseth; it spreadeth wide its wing;
It maketh me as a shadow, and my City a vanished thing!
*Lead.* Out on the smoke she goeth,
And her name no man knoweth;
And the cloud is northward, southward;
Troy is gone for ever!

*A great crash is heard, and the Wall is lost in smoke and darkness.*

*Hec.* Ha! Marked ye? Heard ye?
The crash of the towers that fall!
*Lead.* All is gone!
*Hec.* Wrath in the earth and quaking and a flood that sweepeth all,
*Lead.* And passeth on!

*The Greek trumpet sounds.*

*Hec.* Farewell!—O spirit grey,
Whatso is coming,
Fail not from under me.
Weak limbs, why tremble ye?
Forth where the new long day
Dawneth to slavery!
*Cho.* Farewell from parting lips,
Farewell!—Come, I and thou,
Whatso may wait us now,
Forth to the long Greek ships
And the sea's foaming.

[*The trumpet sounds again, and the Women go out in the darkness*

## GREEK COMEDY

Greek, or Attic, Comedy developed later than tragedy, but its exact origin is not known. It is supposed that the riotous ceremonies accompanying the festival of the god of wine, Dionysus, led to improvised dialogues and to burlesques of the people present, and that in the course of time these grew into regular comedies. At any rate, the fun and the action in some of the Greek comedies that have been handed down through the centuries are as unbridled and coarse as they must have been in the ancient revels of Dionysus. When comedy reached its height in the Fifth Century B.C. in the plays of **Aristophanes** (445?–385 B.C.), one of the most original comic geniuses the world has ever known, these same elements appear.

But Aristophanes added satire on all kinds of questions which were the talk of Athens of his day: such as the policies of the war party or other governmental problems; the absurd claim of women that they should have a right to vote; the alarming teachings of the radical thinker Socrates; the demoralizing drama of the upstart Euripides. Aristophanes calls public personages by name in his plays, and uses bitter sarcasm and ridicule in his attacks. He is always on the side of the conservatives and upholds the good old ways. One of his most characteristic and entertaining plays is *The Frogs*, in which he attacks Euripides and praises the grand old tragedian Aeschylus, although he even pokes fun at him, too.

There is practically no plot at all in an Aristophanic comedy: there is an underlying idea which serves to hold together loosely the six main divisions of the play. One of the most distinctive of these is the *parabasis*, in which the actors go off the stage, and the twenty-four members of the chorus swing around and speak directly to the audience about education, war, or anything else that the dramatist wishes to discuss either seriously or jokingly.

The *episodes* are disjointed scenes that may be satiric, funny, or even vulgar,—and are held together only by the lively or beautiful songs for which Aristophanes is especially famous. Much of the fun lay in the stage "business." The costuming, singing, and dancing of the chorus made one of the outstanding features of this ancient form of *revue*. The light operas of **Gilbert** (Sir William S. Gilbert, 1836–1911) and **Sullivan** (Sir Arthur Sullivan, 1842–1900) in the Nineteenth Century are, perhaps, a little like this kind of comedy; for they, too, contain keen satire on current social or political topics underneath all the gayety and nonsense of the episodes and songs.

Aristophanes is said to have written fifty-four (or forty-four) comedies, of which eleven have survived. These are: *The Archanians; The Knights; The Clouds; The Wasps; Peace; The Birds; Lysistrata; Thesmophoriazusae* (*Women's Festival of Demeter*); *The Frogs; Ecclesiazusae* (*Women in Parliament*); *Plutus* (*Wealth*).

The form of comedy written by Aristophanes is called *Old Comedy*. His death was followed by a period of *Middle Comedy* (about 390–338 B.C.). No plays of this type have survived. By this time abuses and attacks on public characters had become so violent that they had to be stopped; and a change took place that is aptly summarized by the French writer Boileau:[1]

Wisdom and virtue, honor, wit, and sense,
Were subject to buffooning insolence;
Poets were publicly approved and sought
That vice extolled and virtue set at naught:
A Socrates himself, in that loose age,
Was made the pastime of a scoffing stage.
At last the public took in hand the cause,
And cured this madness by the power of laws,
Forbade, at any time or any place,
To name the persons or describe the face.
The stage its ancient fury thus let fall,
And comedy diverted without gall;
By mild reproofs recovered minds diseased,
And,—sparing persons,—innocently pleased.[2]

This later type, thus described, is known as *New Comedy* (338–250 B.C.). It is much like modern comedy. The structure of the plays is different from Old Comedy, the most revolutionary change being the complete disappearance of the chorus which had really been the heart of Aristophanes's plays. There is a real plot, in the sense in which we use the term. It is generally in the form of a love story. The characters are types of ordinary people; such as the miserly or indulgent father, who causes most of the trouble to the young lovers; a son, who is a gay young spendthrift, desperately in love with some one whom his father disapproves of; the girl, generally an unfortunate but beautiful slave, who frequently turns out to be a long-lost, kidnaped heiress; her old nurse, who is a great matchmaker; and always, and most important of all, the cunning but loyal slave, who, by his common sense or his tricks, helps his young master out of difficult situations. Another character, especially amusing to the audience, is the hungry parasite, or hanger-on, who by flattery and talebearing hopes to earn an invitation to dinner. Sometimes there is a cook, or a merchant, or a boastful, cowardly soldier; sometimes the plot is complicated by two love affairs at cross purposes.

These New Comedies were written by **Philemon** (361–262 B.C.) and **Menander** (342–291 B.C.); but the only form in which they have come down to us, except for scattered quotations, is in the Latin translations of the Roman comedy writers Plautus and Terence.

When the New Comedies were acted in Athens, the actors still wore masks, which were of a great variety but stereotyped in appearance so that the audience could distinguish immediately the cross old father from the indulgent; the impulsive young lover from the serious; the modest young lady from the talkative; and so on. When a century later these plays were given in their Latin form at Rome, the masks had disappeared, and the actors used wigs and make-up instead.

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[1] See page 120.

[2] Soames's Translation of Boileau's *Art of Poetry*, Canto III.

## READING LIST

*Agamemnon*, Aeschylus
*Prometheus*, Aeschylus
*Oedipus the King*, Sophocles
*Philoctetes*, Sophocles
*Medea*, Euripides
*Alcestis*, Euripides
*Iphigenia among the Taurians*, Euripides
*Hippolytus*, Euripides
*Balaustion's Adventure*, Robert Browning
*Aristophanes' Apology*, Robert Browning
*The Frogs*, Aristophanes
*Lysistrata*, Aristophanes (adapted and arranged by Winifred Ayres Hope)

## TOPICS

The Life of Aeschylus
The Life of Sophocles
The Life of Euripides
The Life of Aristophanes
The Glorious Age of Greece
Great Men of the Fifth Century, B.C.; Socrates; Pericles; Herodotus; Thucydides; Phidias; Plato; Aristotle
A Comparison of Antigone in Aeschylus's *Seven against Thebes* with Antigone in Sophocles's Play
A Comparison of Antigone with Joan of Arc in George Bernard Shaw's *Saint Joan*
A Comparison of *Oedipus at Colonus* with *King Lear*
The Character of Electra As Depicted by Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides (in the *Choephori* by Aeschylus, *Electra* by Sophocles, and *Electra* by Euripides)
A Greek Trilogy As Exemplified in the *Oresteia* of Aeschylus
A Comparison of *Prometheus* by Aeschylus with Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound*
Comparison of a Wagnerian Opera with an Aeschylean Tragedy
Mendelssohn's Music for the *Antigone*
Music for the Representation of *The Birds* in Scenes Composed by John Knowles Paine, Given at Harvard University, May 1801, published by G. Schirmer, Jr., Boston Music Company
Modern Presentations of Greek Plays
The Nurse as a Stock Figure in Drama (Compare the Nurse in the *Choephori* of Aeschylus, the *Hippolytus*, the *Medea* of Euripides, and the *Medea* of Seneca, with the Nurse in Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*)
Use of the Chorus in *Henry V*
Use of the Chorus in a Modern Play: see *Abraham Lincoln* by John Drinkwater
The Modern Revival of Masks
The Spectacle in a Greek Play
Greek Acting
The Mimetic Dances of Primitive People
The Oriental Theatre
The Japanese *No* Drama

# ROMAN DRAMA

Although the drama of Rome covers a period of about five hundred years, it produced no supremely great dramatists. It was, in fact, imitative rather than original. When Rome conquered Greece in the second century B.C., she adopted the drama of the Greeks with the rest of Greek art and culture. The Roman poet **Horace** (Quintus Horatius Flaccus, 65–8 B.C.) says of his own nation:

> Genius to Greece, to Greece the pride of phrase
> Heaven gave, of nothing covetous but praise.
> Not so our youth, who, cramped by hopeful drilling,
> Learn into fifty parts to split one shilling.
> Let young Albinus solve the problem sought;
> "Take one from five-pence; what results?"—"A groat."
> "Good! you're the boy to thrive! But come, explain,
> If added, what?"—"A tester."—"Good again!"—
> Where hearts thus trained to petty pelf we find,
> And rust like this has cankered o'er the mind,
> Who'd look for finished poems, wrought with toil,
> Worthy the cypress case and cedar oil?[1]

An educated Greek slave, Livius Andronicus, is said to have been the first to translate a Greek tragedy and comedy into Latin, the occasion being a public festival celebrating the victories of the First Punic War. Other Roman poets followed in his steps and adapted or imitated the later Greek plays.

Tragedy came to be reserved for the appreciation of the aristocratic and literary class, for it did not appeal to the heterogeneous crowds that made up the Roman populace. Their taste for comedy, however, had been fostered by the rude and vulgar *saturae* (literally, *medley*, from which comes our *satire*). These were impromptu dialogues and pantomimes, accompanied by the flute, in celebration of religious and family festivals in the country districts. When later introduced into Rome, they were performed as farcical afterpieces to the literary dramas which were modeled on the Greek. Finally the *saturae* were combined with the *mimes*, based on the *fabulae Atellanae*, which were crude sketches full of buffoonery, depicting incidents and characters from everyday life. The characters became conventionalized, and have been handed down in the *Commedia dell' Arte* of later Italian drama.

But Roman comedy that has survived as literature is based on the Greek plays of Menander and his contemporaries. The plot of the Greek play was kept; occasionally, but not always, the names of the places or characters were Latinized; local hits were added, and current Roman jokes incorporated into the dialogue. The prologue became a very essential introduction to the play; for by emphatic reiteration and summary it impressed the story of the plot upon the understanding of the illiterate audience; and it was full of jokes to get them into an amiable frame of mind. The division into acts did not occur until the Renaissance. Sometimes the speeches were chanted to the accompaniment of a flute. If the actor could not sing, some one who could was hired to stand in front of the flute-player, and all that was left for the actor to do was to interpret the lines by gestures and facial expression. The actors were Greek slaves, who always faced the possibility of a beating by their masters if the play proved unpopular. Instead of masks they wore vividly colored wigs and costumes of definite colors to indicate the different character types in the play. Old men, for example, wore white togas and the young men purple; slaves wore brown or gray with red wigs; parasites were padded to make them look fat, and wore black cloaks; girls were in white, old women in blue or yellow.

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[1] Howes's Translation of Horace's *Art of Poetry* (*Ars Poetica*). Ginn and Company, Publishers

Although the Greek theatre was used as a model for the Roman theatre, certain changes were made. The orchestra,—no longer needed for a chorus that had disappeared from the drama,—was utilized for seats for the senators and patricians. This brought them so close to the level of the stage that the platform had to be lowered and lengthened. The proscenium was heightened in proportion, and was then elaborately decorated. Three doors representing three houses in a row were set in the wall of the proscenium, and the long narrow stage represented a street, at the extreme ends of which action could take place supposedly out of hearing of the characters in the center of the stage. When the scene had to be changed to an interior, the whole front of one of these houses could be taken down. The exit to the extreme right of the actor was by convention supposed to lead to the suburbs or the harbor, and any character coming in from that end was understood at once by the audience to be a foreigner or to be returning from a distance. Conversely, the end exit at the extreme left of the stage led to the city and the forum, and was used by citizens of the town where the action was laid. An altar to Apollo stood in the middle of the stage.[1]

Through use of concrete and vaulted architecture the Romans could erect theatres on level ground. In order to give every one a view of the stage, the slope of the tiers of seats was made more precipitous than in the Greek hillside theatre. Awnings could be stretched across the top of the theatre to protect the spectators.

The stone theatre built by Pompey in 55 B.C. seated, according to Pliny, 40,000 people, and was used also as an amphitheatre for gladiatorial combats. The best preserved of the Roman theatres is the one at Orange, France, which is still used every summer by the Comédie Française in its revival of classic plays.

## ROMAN COMEDY

**Plautus** (Titus Maccius Plautus, 254?–184 B.C.) is the earliest Roman writer of comedy whose plays have come down to us. He is supposed to have engaged in foreign trade until he became bankrupt, when he finally settled in Rome as a professional playwright and producer. Twenty of his comedies are extant. They are adaptations of the Greek *New Comedies* although scholars consider the prologues the composition of Plautus himself. His comedies were popular in the days of the Roman Republic, and were later read and enjoyed by the early Christian fathers. After the Revival of Learning, when twelve of the plays that had been lost were rediscovered in manuscript in 1429, Plautus was looked upon as one of the world's greatest dramatists, and his plays were imitated by Shakespeare, Ben Jonson, Molière, and others. The first English comedy produced in London, *Ralph Royster Doyster*, by Nicholas Udall in 1550–2 is based on Plautus' *Miles Gloriosus* (*The Braggart Soldier*).

The plays of Plautus are love intrigues with the stock characters of the late Greek comedies. The plots are full of complications and surprises, and the characters, especially the slaves, are humorously real.

Some of the best-known of the plays of Plautus are: *Captivi* (*The Captives*); *Menaechmi* (*The Twins*); *Miles Gloriosus* (*The Braggart Soldier*); *Aulularia* (*The Pot of Gold*).

**Terence** (Publius Terentius Afer, 185–159 B.C.) was a more polished but less original comic dramatist than his predecessor Plautus. He was a foreigner, an African slave, educated brilliantly by a Roman senator Terentius, whose name he took when he was set free. In his short life he became the friend of the young patricians of Rome, and submitted for their critical approval his artistic translations of the comedies of Menander. In his twenty-sixth year he traveled to Greece, and was either drowned at sea, or, according to one account, died of grief over the loss of the manuscripts of his new comedies. We have only six of his plays.

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[1] See Book V, Chapters 3, 5, 6, 7, 8 of *Ten Books on Architecture* by Vitruvius Pollio.

On account of the refinement of his style, he appealed to the cultured classes in Rome; he was a favorite author of both Cicero and Horace; and later of the Latin writers of the Renaissance, and the French critics of the neo-classic school.

His plays are love stories, comedies of society, and are more witty and less broadly humorous than those of Plautus. They are more Greek than Roman. As they appealed to the cultivated literary taste, and hence were unpopular with the rude Roman audiences, they came to be read rather than acted.

Terence retained the Greek titles in his six plays. They are: *Andria* (*The Girl from Andros*); *Hecyra* (*The Stepmother*); *Hauton-Timorumenos* (*The Self-Tormentor*); *Eunuchus* (*The Eunuch*); *Phormio* (*Phormio, the Parasite*); *Adelphi* (*The Brothers*).

## ROMAN TRAGEDY

Roman tragedy became wholly literary. Its only interest lies in the influence which it exerted over European drama after the Renaissance through the plays of the Roman **Seneca** (Lucius Annaeus Seneca, the younger, c. 3 B.C.–65 A.D.). This genial Spanish-Roman philosopher became the teacher of Nero, over whom he exerted a good influence, until at last he lost the Emperor's favor and was commanded by him to commit suicide. Seneca's writings included scientific works; moral treatises in letters and dialogues on mercy, forgiveness, serenity, self-control, and similar subjects; orations to be delivered by Nero; and adaptations in Latin of nine Greek tragedies. There has been attributed to him a tenth tragedy, *Octavia*, which is the only complete Roman historical play (*fabula praetexta*) in existence. *Octavia* is an attack on Nero, and in it Seneca himself appears as one of the characters.

Most of his nine Greek tragedies are based on plays by Euripides, although Seneca uses tragedies of Sophocles and Aeschylus also as his inspiration. The plot is divided into five acts, separated by lyrical choruses, and the tragedy must always end in at least one death. They were probably not intended for stage production, but for recitation in select imperial circles. The style is therefore extremely declamatory; there is more rhetoric than action. The language is epigrammatic and full of mythological allusions. Everybody in the play is much given to moralizing and to self-analysis. The effect is theatrical, in its worst sense. The messenger speeches are very long and are full of flowery or lurid description. Romantic settings, such as storms, ominous portents and magical incantations are described in much detail. The speeches, in fact, are so long that the play reads like a series of elocutionary monologues.

The situations are melodramatic and exaggerated; but the action is revealed through these long speeches rather than through actual dramatic conflict on the stage. Most incidents happen behind the scenes and are then narrated to the audience. Ghosts calling for revenge, crime for crime's sake, horror upon horror, are intended to thrill the audience. In the *Trojan Women*, for instance, the opening speech of Hecuba contains a gruesome description of the slaughter of old King Priam; the body of little Astyanax is said to be too hideously mangled to be restored to Andromache; ghosts and warning visions—off stage, however—form the incentives for the succeeding action. Again in *Oedipus* Teiresias summons the spirit of Laius—off stage—in order to learn who the real murderer is. In this play the horrors know no restraint: the messenger, after discoursing for a hundred lines upon Oedipus's agony and indecision when he has learned his identity, narrates in all the gory detail the account of how the raving King dug out his eyes with his fingers and then tore the bleeding sockets with his nails! Led by the Furies, Medea, in the play of that name, slays her sons on the stage one by one in full sight of their father Jason – just after she has had a vision of her brother's ghost. The play reads:

(*Medea sees a vision of the furies and her brother's ghost.*) *She speaks:*

But whither hastes that throng
Of furies? What their quest? What mean their brandished fires?
Whom threats this hellish host with horrid, bloody brands?
I hear the writhing lash resound of serpents huge.
Whom seeks Megaera with her deadly torch? Whose shade
Comes gibbering there with scattered limbs? It is my brother!
Revenge he seeks, and we will grant his quest. Then come,
Within my heart plunge all your torches, rend me, burn;
For lo, my bosom open to your fury's stroke.
O brother bid these vengeful goddesses depart
And go in peace down to the lowest shades of hell.
And do thou leave me to myself, and let this hand
That slew thee with the sword now offer sacrifice
Unto thy shade.
(*Slays her first son.*)[1]

All of these exaggerations and tricks of style reappear in the so-called classic drama of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in France and England.

## AULULARIA; OR THE POT OF GOLD

TITUS MACCIUS PLAUTUS

Translated by Edward H. Sugden

(*Third century,* B.C.)

### INTRODUCTION

*Neither the Greek source of this play nor the date of its reproduction by Plautus at Rome is known. The name Aulularia signifies the Play of the Little Pot. The end of it has unfortunately perished along with the beginning of the next play, the Bacchides; but the prologue enables us to supply the deficiency, so far, at least, as the completion of the story is concerned. It has been frequently imitated; the adaptations of Molière and Fielding are best known. The plot requires very little modification in order to fit the play for general reading. The scene is laid in Athens. I have used Wagner's edition of this play.*[2]

### DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

THE HOUSEHOLD GOD OF EUCLIO
EUCLIO, *an old man*
STAPHYLA, *an old woman, his housekeeper*
EUNOMIA, *sister of Megadorus*
MEGADORUS, *an old man*
STROBILUS, *slave of Megadorus*
ANTHRAX, *a cook*
CONGRIO, *a cook*
STROBILUS, *slave of Lyconides*
LYCONIDES, *a young man, nephew of Megadorus*
[PHÆDRA, *a young lady, daughter of Euclio*]

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[1] Translation of Frank Justus Miller, University of Chicago Press.

[2] The introduction and the notes are by Sugden.

### ARGUMENT I

A miserly old man called Euclio,
Who hardly dares to trust himself, has found
Buried within his house, a Pot of Gold;
This Pot he hides again, and pale with fear
Keeps guard on it. A youth, Lyconides,
Has won the love of Euclio's only daughter,
And secretly becomes engaged to her.
Meanwhile, one Megadorus, an old man,
Persuaded by his sister to get married,
Demands the miser's daughter for his wife.
The hard old man reluctantly consents,
And, fearing for his Pot, takes it away,
And hides it, first in one place, then another.
The servant of that same Lyconides
Who loves the girl, lays plots against the miser.
The youth himself beseeches Megadorus,
Who is his uncle, to give up the girl.
When Euclio's been tricked out of his Pot,
He unexpectedly receives it back,
And gladly gives Lyconides his daughter.

### ARGUMENT II [*ACROSTIC*]

**A** Pot of Gold old Euclio preserves
**U**nsleepingly with anxious vigilance.
**L**yconides is plighted to his daughter.
**U**ndowered, Megadorus seeks her hand.
**L**iking the match, he sends both cooks and meat.
**A**nxious about his gold, old Euclio hides it.
**R**ight soon the lover's slave finds out and steals it,
**I**t is restored to Euclio by the lover,
**A**nd for his pains he gets both wife and gold.

*The scene represents a street, with the houses of Euclio and Megadorus side by side. Enter the* HOUSEHOLD GOD[1] *from Euclio's house.*

THE HOUSEHOLD GOD AS PROLOGUE

*Prologue.* That none of you may wonder who I am,
I'll briefly tell you. I'm the Household God:
This house from which you saw me coming out,
For many years I've occupied and guarded
For the sire and grandsire of its present owner.
His grandfather intrusted to my care
A secret treasure which he buried deep
Under the earth, and begged of me to keep it;
But when he died, so covetous was he,
He wouldn't show it even to his son,
But rather chose to leave him penniless
Than point him out the treasure. So he left
That son of his a farm of no great size,
Whereon he lived in toil and wretchedness.
But when he died who'd hidden away the gold,
I began watching, if his son would pay
Greater regard to me than did his father;
But he, with ever-growing carelessness,
Neglected me and failed to do me honour;
So I neglected him; and soon he died.
He left a son behind him, who lives here,
As covetous as his sire and grandsire were.
He has one daughter, who from day to day
With frankincense or wine entreats my grace,
And gives me garlands. So for her sweet sake
I've caused old Euclio to find the treasure,
To be a marriage portion for the girl.
A gentleman has fallen in love with her,
And has discovered who his sweetheart is;
But neither she nor Euclio knows his name.
To-day I'll make the old man from next door here
Ask her in marriage; I do it with this purpose—
That her true lover may secure her hand.
Now this old man who'll ask her for his wife

---

[1] **Household God:** The Lar or Household God probably appeared as a youth, with short tunic and buskins, and a horn in his hand. See the picture in Rich's Dict. of Antiquities, S. v. Lar.

Is uncle to the youth I told you of,
Who fell in love with her at Ceres' feast.—
But hark! old Euclio shouting out, as usual,
And turning his housekeeper out of doors,
Lest she should get to know. I guess he wants
To see his gold, whether it's not been stolen.
[*Exit* Household God

*Enter* Euclio, *pushing out* Staphyla *from his house*

*Euclio.* Get out, I say, get out; out of this door!
You treacherous spy, with peeping, prying eyes!
*Staphyla.* Why beat a *wretch* like me?
*Euc.* To make you *wretched*,
And give you a *bad* time, you *bad* old woman!
*Sta.* But tell me why you've turned me out of doors.
*Euc.* Harvest of whips! and must I give you reasons?
Away from the door!—See how she crawls along!—
I tell you what it is: if I can get
A cudgel or a whip, by Hercules!
I'll see if I can't mend your tortoise-pace.
*Sta.* May Heaven grant me grace to hang myself,
Rather than be your slave on these hard terms!
*Euc.* Hark you, the hag is muttering to herself!—
By Hercules! you wretch, I'll dig your eyes out,
So that you can't be watching all I do.
Go off now! Further!
*Sta.* Further still?
*Euc.* Well, well,
Stay there! and if you move a finger's breadth,
Or even the width of a nail, from where you are,
Or look this way, until I give you leave,
I'll send you to the gallows for a lesson!—
[*Aside.*] I'm sure I never saw a worse old woman
Than this; I'm horribly afraid of her;
I fear she'll trick me with some plot or other,
And smell out where my gold is hidden away;
Yes, in the back of her head the wretch has eyes.
And now to see whether the gold is safe
Where I have hidden it; how it plagues my soul!
[*Exit* Euclio *into his house*
*Sta.* Alas, by Castor! I cannot discover
What trouble has befallen my master here;
Or madness is it? Ten times in a day
He'll often turn me out in this same fashion.
By Pollux! I can't guess what whims possess him.
He'll sit up all night long; then all the day,
Like some lame cobbler, he will stay at home.
And then again, how I'm to keep from him
This foolish love affair of his dear daughter's,
I cannot think; there's nothing left for me,
Except to make myself a capital I,[1]
And round my wretched neck a halter tie.

*Reënter* Euclio *from his house*

*Euc.* [*aside*]. My mind's relieved, so I'll come forth again,
Now I have found that all is safe indoors.
[*Aloud to* Staphyla.] You come inside and keep a careful watch.
*Sta.* Keep watch on what? That no one steals the house?
There's nothing else at all to tempt a thief;
It's full of emptiness and spiders webs.
*Euc.* Doubtless, for your sake, Jupiter should make me
A Philip or Darius,[2] you old witch!
I wish those spiders' webs to be preserved!

---

[1] a capital I: literally, "make myself into one long letter;" the resemblance of a hanging man to the letter I is sufficiently obvious.

[2] A Philip or Darius: Philip of Macedon and Darius of Persia were two proverbially wealthy monarchs.

I'm poor, I know; what the gods send I bear.
Get in and shut the door. I'll be back soon.
Take care you don't let anybody in.
They'll ask for fire perhaps, so put it out,
So there may be no reason for their asking;
If one spark lives, *your* vital spark I'll quench!
If they want water, tell them it's cut off.
The knife, the axe, the pestle, and the mortar,
Which our good neighbours always want to borrow,
Tell them the thieves have been and stolen them.
No soul must be let in whilst I'm away.
Yea, even this I charge you solemnly,—
E'en should Good Fortune come, don't you admit her.

*Sta.* O, she'll take care of that herself, I'm sure;
She never comes within a mile of us.

*Euc.* Silence! go in!

*Sta.* To hear is to obey.

*Euc.* Mind, fasten both the bolts. I'll be back soon.

[*Exit* STAPHYLA *into the house*

It rends my heart to have to leave the house.
I go reluctantly; though I've my reasons;
The master of our ward has promised us
To give us each a drachma, man by man.[1]
If I neglect it and don't go to get it,
They'll all suspect that I have gold at home;
For 'tis not likely that a poor old man
Would miss a chance of getting e'en a trifle.
As it is, though I most carefully conceal it,
They all appear to know it, and they greet me
Far more effusively than was their wont;
They come, they stop, they shake me by the hand;
It's "How d'ye do?" and "How are you, old man?"
And "How are you getting on?" from morn till night.
Now, I'll be going whither I set out
And come back home as quickly as I can.

[*Exit* EUCLIO *to the market-place*

*Enter from their house* EUNOMIA *and* MEGADORUS

*Eunomia.* I hope you'll believe that I say this, my brother,
As a matter of duty, for surely no other
Should care for your welfare like me, your own sister.
I know you think woman a bore, and resist her
As one that is terribly given to chatter;
Indeed I remember I've heard some such matter
As that not one is born dumb in each generation;
Well, one thing I *will* say without hesitation,
You'll not find another who's nearer and dearer;
And so when I talk, you should be a kind hearer.
For surely we two should advise one another,
And not keep things back and in fearfulness smother
Our thoughts, but declare them, like sister and brother.
So I've brought you out here, and away from the clatter,
To discuss with you freely a family matter.

*Megadorus.* Thou best of women, here's my hand!

*Eu.* Where is she? I don't understand.

*Meg.* Yourself!

*Eu.* Not me!

*Meg.* Oh, I'll withdraw!

*Eu.* You ought to make the truth your law.
No woman's absolutely best;
All fail in something, 'tis confest.

*Meg.* Oh, I'm with you there!
Never will I contradict you on that point, my sister dear!

*Eu.* Then listen, my treasure.

*Meg.* I will; so employ and command me at pleasure.

*Eu.* What I think now would be just the best thing for you
I'll tell you, if you've leisure.

---

[1] a drachma, man by man: These distributions of money to the citizens were common enough at Athens, as they became afterwards at Rome.

*Meg.* Oh, it's just like you, sister!
*Eu.* I wish you would do—
*Meg.* Why, what, sister?
*Eu.* What I don't fear to aver
Would make your life blest and provide you an heir.
*Meg.* Heaven grant it!
*Eu.* I want you to marry a wife.
*Meg.* Oh, misery me, you've bereft me of life!
*Eu.* How's that?
*Meg.* Oh, your words rattle round my poor bones,
And shatter my skull. Sister dear, you speak stones!
*Eu.* Oh, do as I beg you!
*Meg.* I would if I durst.
*Eu.* It would be for your good.
*Meg.* Yes it would—to die first!
But hear the conditions I stipulate pray!
She must marry to-morrow and die the next day.
If you'll find me a wife who on these terms will marry,
Get ready the feast, for no longer I'll tarry.
*Eu.* I'll find you one, who's quite a wealthy personage,
Though you are getting on, and she's of middle age;
If you'll permit me, I will get her, I'll engage.
*Meg.* May I be allowed a question?
*Eu.* Yes, as many as you choose.
*Meg.* If an old man marries one who's past her prime, see how he'll lose!
Even should a son be given them, and that's very dubious,
There's no doubt about his name, he must be christened Postumus.[1]
Now, dear sister, I'll relieve you of your care about the pelf;
Thanks to heav'n and our forefathers, I am rich enough myself.
I don't want your well-bred lady with a temper and a dower,
Shouting, ordering, riding in an ivory litter from her bower,
Clothed in purple; these expenses turn a husband to a slave.
*Eu.* Tell me then, I do beseech you, who's the wife you'd like to have?
*Meg.* So I will. You know old Euclio, our poor next-door neighbour here?
*Eu.* Yes; he's not so bad a fellow.
*Meg.* Well, it is his daughter dear
That I want to get engaged to. Sister, don't you raise objection.
She is poor, you'd say; she is! but, poor or rich, she's my selection.
*Eu.* Well, heaven bless you both!
*Meg.* Amen!
*Eu.* Then do you want me any more?
*Meg.* No; good-bye!
*Eu.* Good-bye, dear brother!
[*Exit* EUNOMIA *into her house*
*Meg.* Now I'll knock at Euclio's door.
Ah! I see him, coming home from somewhere; yes, it's he, I'm sure.

*Enter* EUCLIO, *returning from the market-place*

*Euc.* Ah, my mind misgave me sadly when just now I left my home!
So I went reluctantly; and not a single wardsman's come,
Nor the master of the ward, who had to dole the money out.
Hastily I'll hasten home. My soul is there, though I'm without.
*Meg.* May the gods bestow upon you, Euclio, their benison.
*Euc.* Heaven bless you, Megadorus!
*Meg.* Well, how are you getting on?
*Euc.* [*aside*]. Not for nothing does a rich man greet a poor one civilly!
Oh! he knows I've got that treasure, so he's affable to me.
*Meg.* How d'you do, I say?
*Euc.* But poorly from the money point of view.
*Meg.* Ah, well, if your mind's contented, you've enough to see you through.
*Euc.* [*aside*]. Ah, that hag has doubtless told him of the gold; the secret's out!
I'll tear out her tongue and eyes, the miserable pry-about!
*Meg.* What are you saying to yourself there?
*Euc.* Sighing o'er my poverty.

---

[1] **Postumus**: the last: the idea apparently being that it is not to be anticipated that more than one child will result from such a union.

I've a grown-up girl who's dowerless so she cannot married be;
I can't find a husband for her.
*Meg.* Don't say so, good Euclio.
That's all right; I'll see she's married; I'm your friend, I'd have you know.
*Euc.* [*aside*]. All these promises mean something; he is gaping for my gold.
Stones in one hand, bread in t'other! no! I'm not to be cajoled!
I will never trust a rich man when he is so monstrous civil;
Though he strokes you down so gently, he would send you to the devil.
Ah, I know those cuttlefish, who stick to everything they touch!
*Meg.* Pray, attend to me a little! just a word (it won't be much),
I would say about a matter that concerns both you and me.
*Euc.* [*aside*]. Out alas! he's hooked my treasure! now he's anxious, I can see,
To conclude some bargain with me; I must go and look inside.

*Sets off towards his house.*

*Meg.* Where are you off to?
*Euc.* Just a minute! I have something to provide.
[*Exit* Euclio *into his house*
*Meg.* I'm afraid that when I tell him I desire to be his son,
And to marry his fair daughter, he will think I'm making fun.
Not another living man so harps upon his poverty.[1]

*Reënter* Euclio

*Euc.* [*aside*]. Heaven protects me; it's all safe! if that is safe which one can see.
I *was* scared before I went indoors! pale terror froze my blood!
[*Aloud.*] Now I'm back, good Megadorus! what's your wish?
*Meg.* You're very good!
Now I hope you won't mind answering certain questions I will ask.
*Euc.* If I don't dislike the questions that will be an easy task.
*Meg.* Tell me, what is your opinion of my family?
*Euc.* Why, good!
*Meg.* Of my honour?
*Euc.* Good again!
*Meg.* My acts?
*Euc.* You act just as you should.
*Meg.* Do you know my age?
*Euc.* You're pretty old, and have a pretty pile!
*Meg.* Well, I know that you're a man entirely free from guilty guile;
So I think and always thought.
*Euc.* [*aside*]. Ah, he's got scent of that same gold!
[*Aloud.*] Is that all?
*Meg.* Now our opinions of each other have been told,
Praying it may prove a blessing to your girl, yourself, and me,
I request your daughter's hand. Come, promise that it so shall be.
*Euc.* Megadorus, you are doing a deed unworthy of your fame;
Though I'm poor I never hurt you; why should you of me make game?
Ne'er by deed or word have I deserved that you should treat me so.
*Meg.* Nay, I didn't come to mock you, nor am I so doing. No!
I should be ashamed to do it.
*Euc.* Why then ask my daughter's hand?
*Meg.* That we all may make each other happier; that's what I have planned.
*Euc.* It just strikes me, Megadorus, that you're rich, and what is more,
Occupy a high position; I'm the poorest of the poor.
Should I now betroth my daughter unto you, I sadly fear
You're the ox and I'm the ass; and if we're yoked together here,
Should the ass not pull up level, in the dirt he'll lie forlorn,
Whilst the ox no more regards him than if he had ne'er been born.
I can't pull with you, I fear; and my old friends will mock at me,
So I'd have no stable stable, should she be divorced, you see.
Then the asses all would bite me, and the oxen gore me too;
If I leave my fellow-asses for the oxen, peace adieu!

---

[1] Not . . . poverty. He's so full of his own poverty that he'll never think it possible that a rich man should marry his daughter.

*Meg.* Nay, the closer you associate with the folk of good degree,
All the better for yourself! So take my offer, close with me,
And betroth your daughter to me.
*Euc.* She's no dowry.
*Meg.* I don't care;
For her purity and sweetness are a dowry rich and rare.
*Euc.* I just tell you that you mayn't suppose I've found some treasure trove.
*Meg.* Oh, of course! Betroth her to me!
*Euc.* So be it.—But ah! by Jove!
Am I ruined?
*Meg.* What's up now?
*Euc.* I heard a spade clink on a stone.
*Meg.* Oh, it's only someone digging in my garden.
[*Exit* Euclio *into his house*

Where's he gone?
Off he runs before it's settled! I suppose he scorns me then.
When he sees I seek his friendship, he just does like other men:
If a wealthy man endeavours to be friends with one that's poor,
They can hardly come to terms; the poor man thinks he's not secure.
When the chance has gone for ever, then he wants it back too late.

*Euc.* [*coming out again, to* Staphyla *within*]. Oh, if I don't tear your tongue out by the roots, you reprobate,
I myself will give you leave to send me to the gallows straight!
*Meg.* So it seems, by Hercules! friend Euclio, you think me fit
To be mocked in my old age; I don't see how I merit it.
*Euc.* No, by Pollux! Megadorus! How could I do such a deed?
*Meg.* Well, will you betroth your daughter to me?
*Euc.* Yes, if we're agreed
On the dowry that I mentioned.
*Meg.* You betroth her then?
*Euc.* I do.
Heaven approve it!
*Meg.* May it be so!
*Euc.* Pardon my reminding you
Of the compact, that my daughter shouldn't bring you any dower.
*Meg.* I remember.
*Euc.* Ah, but you will shift about from hour to hour.
It's off and on, and on and off with you, exactly as you please.
*Meg.* Well, with you I'll have no quarrel. Now for the festivities!
Make to-day the wedding day.
*Euc.* Yes, that will suit me splendidly.
*Meg.* I'll get ready. Is that all?
*Euc.* It is.
*Meg.* Then that's all right. Good-bye!
Ho, Strobilus, come you quickly with me to the market-place!
[*Exit* Megadorus

*Euc.* Ah, he's gone! By heaven, I pray you, just observe how gold brings grace!
There's no doubt he's heard a whisper of the treasure I have got;
That is what he's gaping after; that's the reason he's so hot!
Where are you, who've been a-blabbing to our neighbours one and all,
That my girl will have a dowry? Staphyla, don't you hear me call?

*Enter* Staphyla *from* Euclio's *house*

Listen! Go and get your dishes washed up and in due array.
I've betrothed my daughter; Megadorus marries her to-day.
*Sta.* Heaven approve it! but it cannot be! too sudden has it come!
*Euc.* Silence! go and have all ready when from market I get home.
Shut the door; I'll soon be back.
[*Exit* Euclio *to the market-place*

*Sta.* O, bless my soul! What shall I do?
Utter ruin overhangs us, me and master's daughter too.
She's in love with that young fellow, though his name we do not know;

We can't hide it any longer; O dear, here's a pretty go!
I must do what master told me; so I'll go inside, I think.
Ah, by Castor! I'm afraid I have a dreadful draught to drink.
[*Exit* Staphyla *into the house*

*Enter* Strobilus, *with* Anthrax *and* Congrio [*cooks*], Phrygia *and* Eleusium [*music girls*], *and other slaves from the market*

*Strobilus.* When master'd done his shopping at the market,
And hired these cooks and dancing girls, he bade me
Divide all he had bought into two parts.
*Congrio.* By Hercules! you sha'n't cut *me* in two!
But if you want me *all*, I'm at your service.
*Anthrax.* Why, if he wants your *awl*,[1] you idiot,
You can't oblige him; for you're not a cobbler.
*Cong.* I didn't mean that kind of awl at all,
But something different, Anthrax.
*Str.* Well, my master
Is marrying to-day.
*Anth.* Whose daughter is it?
*Str.* Old Euclio's, our next-door neighbour here.
Half the provision is to go to him:
One of the cooks, one of the music-girls.
*Anth.* What, half to him and only half to you?
*Str.* Exactly so.
*Cong.* What, couldn't the old man
Pay for a wedding feast for his own daughter?
*Str.* Bah!
*Cong.* Well, why not?
*Str.* Why not? you want to know?
A stone is not as dry as this old fellow.
*Cong.* Do you say so?
*Str.* Yes, and you'd best believe it.
Why, he will call all gods and men to witness
That he is ruined and utterly destroyed,
If a puff of smoke escapes from out his chimney.
Nay, when he goes to bed he ties a bag
Over his mouth.
*Cong.* What for?
*Str.* Lest he should lose
His breath whilst he's asleep. Oh, it's a fact!
*Cong.* Nay, I believe you!
*Str.* Ah, but that's not all;
He weeps to pour away his dirty water.
*Cong.* Do you think that we could coax from the old man
A cool two hundred pounds to buy our freedom?
*Str.* He wouldn't lend his hunger, if you asked him.
Why, yesterday the barber trimmed his nails;
And he picked up and carried off the clippings!
*Anth.* By Pollux! he's a mighty stingy man!
*Str.* Would you believe a man could live so meanly?
A kite once snatched a scrap of meat from him;
Away he runs in tears to the magistrate;
With sighs and groans he starts to beg of him
To send a summons out against the kite!
A thousand things I'd mention if we'd time.
But tell me, which of you's the smarter man?
*Cong.* I, much the better!
*Str.* *Cook*, not *thief*, I mean.
*Cong.* Well, so do I.
*Str.* And you?
*Anth.* I'm what you see.
*Cong.* *He* only cooks on market days; he gets
A job but once a week.[2]
*Anth.* Man of five letters![3]
*You* slander *me?* thief! thief! thrice thievish thief!
*Str.* Be quiet now, and take the fatter lamb.
*Anth.* All right.

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[1] awl: this is not a translation of the original joke, but an equivalent.

[2] He . . . week. He's so bad a cook that he is only hired on market days, when there is a rush, and so only gets a job once a week (lit., once in nine days).

[3] Man of five letters! Lit., of three letters, *viz.*, FUR (=thief).

*Str.* You, Congrio, can take the other,
And go in there;[1] and do you follow him.
You others come with me.
*Cong.* O, that's not fair!
By Hercules! they have the fatter lamb.
*Str.* Then you shall have the fatter music girl!
Phrygia, go with him; and you, Eleusium,
Come here with me.
*Cong.* Strobilus, you're too smart!
You've pushed me off to this old miser's house,
Where I shall have to shout, until I'm hoarse,
For everything I want.
*Str.* O, you're a fool!
To do you favours is to throw 'em away.
*Cong.* How so?
*Str.* Well, first of all, there's no crowd there
To get in your way. If you want anything,
Fetch it from home; don't waste your precious time
In asking for it. In *our* house you'd find
A crowd of servants, heaps of fancy things,
And gold, and silver plate, and costly robes.
If anything got lost—(O yes, I know
You never think of filching—where there's nothing!)
They'd say, "The cooks have stolen it! collar them!
Tie them up, thrash them, throw them in the well."
Now you are safe from this; there's nothing there
For you to steal. So follow me!
*Cong.* I follow!
*Str.* Ho, Staphyla! undo the door!
*Sta.* [*within*]. Who calls?
*Str.* Strobilus.
*Sta.* [*coming out*]. Well, what is it?
*Str.* Please let in
These cooks, this music girl, and these provisions,
Which Megadorus sends to Euclio
Against his marriage feast.
*Sta.* But, good Strobilus,
Is it for Ceres that this feast's prepared?
*Str.* Why do you think so?
*Sta.* Well, I see no wine.[2]
*Str.* The master's bringing that along himself.
*Sta.* We have no firewood.
*Cong.* Have you any laths?
*Sta.* Of course.
*Cong.* They'll do, you needn't send for more.
*Sta.* What, filthy wretch! Because you want a fire
To cook the dinner and discharge your function,
Do you demand that we should burn our house?
*Cong.* O no!
*Str.* Well, take them in.
*Sta.* Pray, follow me.
[*Exeunt* STAPHYLA, CONGRIO, PHRYGIA, *etc., into* EUCLIO'S *house*

*Str.* Push on! I'll go see what the cooks are doing.
To watch those rascals needs the greatest care,
Unless I make them cook down in the well,
And then in baskets haul the dinner up.
But if down there they eat up what they've cooked,
The gods above will go without their dinner—
The gods below get theirs! But here I'm chattering,
As if I'd nothing in the world to do,
With all these sons of thievery in the house.
[*Exit into the house of* MEGADORUS

*Enter* EUCLIO *from the market-place*

*Euc.* I wished to be magnanimous to-day,
And show up well at the marriage of my daughter.
I go to market, ask for fish, and find
It's dear; and lamb is dear, and beef is dear;
And veal, and pork, and cod, they all are dear;
And all the dearer that I had no money.
There's nothing I can buy, so, in a rage,
I come away, and cheat the paltry rogues.
Then on my way I started meditating—

---

[1] there, i. e., to Euclio's house. There are other slaves present besides the cooks and dancing girls, who are addressed in the next clauses.

[2] I see no wine. It would appear that no wine was used at the festivals of Ceres.

"What you have lavished on a festival,
You'll want on common days, if you're not careful."
Thus spake I with my stomach and my soul,
Until I was resolved to spend as little
As I could help upon my daughter's marriage;
And so I bought this incense and these flowers,
To put, in honour of our household god,
Upon the hearth, that he may bless the wedding.—
Hallo! do I behold my house door open?
And what a noise inside! Am I being robbed?
*Cong.* [*within*]. Borrow a larger pot amongst your neighbours;
This is too small. It will not hold the stuff.
*Euc.* Alas! my gold is stolen; he wants my Pot!
Apollo, I beseech thee, come and help me!
Pierce with thine arrows those who steal my treasure,
If e'er before thine aid has thus been given!
But I'll rush in before I'm wholly ruined.
[*Exit* Euclio *into his house*

*Enter* Anthrax *from the house of* Megadorus

*Anth.* Come, Dromo, clean the fish! And you, Machaerio,
Just bone the conger and the eel; be quick!
I'll go next door and borrow a bread-pan
From Congrio. You'd better get that cock
Plucked cleaner than a maiden's face for me.
But what's this uproar going on next door?
The cooks, by Jove, are doing their duty well!
I'll hurry back, or we shall have a row!
[*Exit* Anthrax *into* Megadorus's *house*

*Enter* Congrio *rushing in terror from* Euclio's *house*

*Cong.* Help me, clear the streets,[1] ye citizens, natives, neighbours, strangers, aliens.
Ne'er before have I been hired to cook a feast for bacchanalians—
How he banged us with his cudgels, me and my disciples making
Into pads to try his strength on. Oh, my wretched back is aching!
I never knew a day when wood was offered at a lower rate;
He loaded us with cudgels first, then turned us out of his front gate.
Alas! I die! From out his den the Fury comes with furious look!
He's after me! Well, never mind! I'll take a leaf out of his book.

*Enter* Euclio *from his house*

*Euc.* Come back, you runaway! Stop, thief! stop!
*Cong.* Oh! stop your jaw, sir!
*Euc.* I'll report your name to the magistrates, you scamp!
*Cong.* What for, sir?
*Euc.* You've got a knife.
*Cong.* A cook should have.
*Euc.* My life you threaten!
*Cong.* It's a pity I didn't take it too, before I was beaten.
*Euc.* You're the vilest wretch alive to-day; and that is true, sir!
There's none I would more readily help to punish than you, sir!
*Cong.* O, you needn't tell me; I know it all; the proof is the licking
I've received from your cudgels; I'm as tender as any chicken.
What business have you to meddle with me, you beggarly miser?
*Euc.* Do you ask? By Jove, if I'd hit you harder, 'twould have been wiser.

Euclio *strikes him again.*

*Cong.* Very well! But I'll make you pay, as sure as my head's got sense in't.
*Euc.* I believe it has—a sense of my stick! or there's something dense in't.
I should like to know what you were after, making a riot,
When I was away, within my house!
*Cong.* Well then, be quiet!
I came to cook for the wedding feast.
*Euc.* And pray, with your pardon,

---

[1] clear the streets, i. e., to give room to run.

What does it matter to you what I eat? You're not my guardian.
*Cong.* Well, I want to know if we're to stay to cook your dinner!
*Euc.* And I want to know if my things are safe from you, you sinner!
*Cong.* I only want to remove my pots, if I can do it!
I'm quite content without taking yours.
*Euc.* No more! or you'll rue it.
*Cong.* Why on earth prevent us cooking the feast? That is our mission.
Have we said or done a single thing to cause suspicion?
*Euc.* Do you ask? you villain, you who've found out ways to be spying
Into every cupboard in the house, peeping and prying!
If you'd done your duty and not moved a step away from the fireplace,
You'd have saved yourself a broken head; you deserve it, you scapegrace!
Now to make my fixed determination even still clearer,
If, without my orders, you dare to come a single step nearer,
I'll just make your back as raw as a steak, thwack here and thwack there!
You know now what you've got to expect.
[*Exit* EUCLIO *into his house*

*Cong.* Hallo! come back there!
Well, help me, Laverna![1] If you don't give up my pans, sir,
I'll just raise the deuce in front of the house! Then, perhaps, you'll answer!
What's a man to do, I wonder? I've no luck to-day, that's sure!
I was hired for eighteenpence;[2] my doctor's bill will come to more!

*Reënter* EUCLIO, *with the Pot of Gold under his cloak*

*Euc.* [*aside*]. Ah, my Pot, I'll never leave thee, take thee with me everywhere!
Never more shalt thou be periled by such dangers, I'll take care.
[*Aloud.*] Now then, enter, if you like, you cooks and music girls, and all!
Take in with you, if you wish, your flock of hirelings, great and small.
Cook away and work away as much as you like, and slave like blacks!
*Cong.* Very fine, when with your cudgel you have crammed my crown with cracks!
*Euc.* Get inside, now; you were hired to do your work and not to chatter.
*Cong.* Come, old man, I'll make you pay for thrashing me! That's what's the matter.
I was hired to cook your dinner, not to be your whipping post.
*Euc.* Go to law, then! Stop your clamour! Now, go boil, and fry, and roast,
Or be off and hang yourself.
*Cong.* The same to you, my worthy host!
[*Exit* CONGRIO *into the house of* EUCLIO

*Euc.* Gone at last! Ye gods immortal, it's a perilous affair
When a poor man gets entangled with a wealthy millionaire.
See how Megadorus tries to catch me every kind of way!
He pretends 'twas in my honour that he sent those cooks to-day;
Don't believe it! No! he sent them just to steal my little stock.
Then, as might have been expected, my confounded dunghill cock,
Bought with the old woman's savings, ruined me within an ace;
For the wretch began a-scratching with his claws all round the place
Where the gold was lying buried; piercing anguish thrilled my breast,
So I took a stick and slew him as a burglar manifest.
I've no doubt the cooks had promised they would pay him handsomely,
If he'd show them where the gold was! Now I've put them up a tree!
Why say more? The fight is finished 'twixt the dunghill cock and me!
See, my kinsman, Megadorus, coming from the market-place!
Well, it wouldn't do to cut him; I must stop and do him grace.

---

[1] Laverna: the goddess of thieves.

[2] Lit., for a nummus, =a drachma or didrachma, i.e., about ninepence or eighteenpence of English money to-day.

*Enter* Megadorus *from the market-place; he does not at first see* Euclio

*Meg.* I've told my plan to many of my friends
About my marriage with old Euclio's daughter;
They praise the girl, and say I've done right well.
In my opinion, other wealthy men
Should do the same, and take to them in marriage
The daughters of the poor without a dowry;
So would the State be more harmonious,
For we[1] should lose the odium we've incurred;
Our wives would dread us more than they do now,
And our expenses would be greatly lessened.
As this would please the great majority,
Our only quarrel would be with a few
Of greedy and insatiable soul
Whom neither law nor magistrate can limit.
But if you say, "Whom will the rich girls marry,
Those who have dowers, if this be made the law?"
Let 'em marry where they will but without dowry.
If this were so, they'd seek instead of dower
To bring us sweeter tempers than they do.
I'll cause that mules,[2] dearer than horses now,
Shall be sold cheaper than your Gallic geldings.[3]
*Euc.* [*aside*]. God bless my soul, this is a pleasant hearing!
How kindly does he speak of us poor folk!
*Meg.* No wife would say, "I brought you, sir, a dowry
Far greater than the income you possessed;
Therefore, it's fair I should have robes, and gold,
Maidens, and mules, and mule-drivers, and footmen,
Pages to serve, litters to carry me."
*Euc.* [*aside*]. How well he knows the ways of married ladies!
They ought to make him censor of the women.
*Meg.* Now you can see more carts[4] at your house-door
Than in the country when you're at your farm.
But that is nought compared with the sad day
On which the tradesmen come to get their money.
There stand the fuller,[5] the embroiderer,
Hairdressers, border-makers, violet-dyers,
Dealers in underclothes and bridal veils,
Dyers in yellow, sleeve-makers, perfumers,
Sellers of linen garments, slipper-makers,
Cobblers that squat at ease, and shoemakers;
There stand the sandal-dealers, there the dyers;
The milliners and tailors want their cash;
There stand the belt-makers and girdle-sellers.
You've got these paid; a thousand more press on;
They stand, your gaolers, all about your hall,
Weavers, and fringe-dealers, and cabinet-makers.
You pay them and you think the list's exhausted;
But no! the saffron-dyers march along,
Or some new plague or other with his bill.
*Euc.* [*aside*]. I'd speak to him, but that I fear he'd stop
His tale of women's manners; so I'll wait.
*Meg.* When all these hucksters have been duly paid,
Last comes a soldier, asking for his money.[6]
You go and have a reckoning with your banker,
The hungry soldier waiting for the cash;
And when the banker's got it reckoned up,

---

[1] we, i.e., the wealthier classes.

[2] mules: mules were very costly, being in great demand for the use of ladies of wealth and rank. Megadorus says he will put a stop to the demand.

[3] Gallic geldings were considered very inferior.

[4] more carts: bringing home your wife's shopping.

[5] fuller: cleaner.

[6] asking for his money: the tax for the support of the army, which, when assessed on the wife's property, the husband had to pay.

You find that your account is overdrawn.
The soldier has to wait till another day.
These are a few out of the many troubles
And heavy costs that go with all large dowries.
The undowered wife is in her husband's power;
But dowers bring loss and ruin to the husband.
[*Catches sight of* EUCLIO].
Why, here's my relative before the house!
How are you, Euclio?
*Euc.* With infinite pleasure
I have devoured your speech.
*Meg.* What, did you hear me?
*Euc.* Yes, every word, right from the very first.
*Meg.* Excuse me, don't you think it would be fitter
To get yourself a little better dressed
Against your daughter's wedding?
*Euc.* Megadorus,
I cut my coat according to my cloth.
Let those who've wealth and means remember well
From what they've risen. And pray, don't think that I
Or any other poor man have at home
More than appearances would seem to show.
*Meg.* Nay, don't be down! May Heaven smile on your store,
And bless with growing increase all you have.
*Euc.* [*aside*]. I don't like that expression, "all you have;"
He knows, as well as I do, what I've got.
That wretched hag has told him everything.
*Meg.* Why do you silent leave our conference?
*Euc.* I have a fault to find with you.
*Meg.* What is't?
*Euc.* What is it? why, you've filled my house with thieves;
They swarm in every corner, woe is me!
You've sent into my house five hundred cooks
With six hands each, true sons of Geryon.[1]
Though Argus watched them, who's all over eyes,
Whom Juno set to keep a watch on Jove,
He couldn't do it; then the music-girl
Would drink the fountain of Pirene[2] dry,
At Corinth there, that's if it flowed with wine!
The fish she'd—
*Meg.* There's enough for a regiment!
I sent a lamb too.
*Euc.* Yes, and that same lamb
Is the most care-worn beast I ever saw.
*Meg.* I'd like to hear you prove the lamb is care-worn.
*Euc.* Why, he's all skin and bone; he's thin with care.
Nay, you can see right through him in the sunlight.
He's as transparent as a Punic lantern.[3]
*Meg.* I bought him to be *killed*.
*Euc.* Then you had better
Arrange for his funeral; he's already dead.
*Meg.* Well, come, we'll have a gay carouse together.
*Euc.* I haven't any wine.
*Meg.* Oh, I will order
A cask of fine old wine from my own cellar.
*Euc.* I'd rather not; I drink nothing but water.
*Meg.* Ah, if I live, I'll make you drunk to-day,
You water-drinker!
*Euc.* [*aside*]. Yes, I see his dodge.
He's trying now to bury me in drink,
That he may change the home of this, my gold.
I'll stop that game; I'll hide it somewhere else;
And so he'll lose his labour and his wine.
*Meg.* Excuse me, I must bathe for the sacrifice.
[*Exit* MEGADORUS *into his house*

*Euc.* My Pot, how many enemies thou hast,
And that sweet gold that is shut up in thee!
Now this is my best plan, to carry thee,

---

[1] **Geryon:** a giant with three bodies and, therefore, six hands.

[2] **Fountain of Pirene:** a famous fountain of Corinth. The water flowed through six rock caverns or cisterns into a large marble basin, thus forming a *reservoir*.

[3] **Punic lantern:** perhaps made of glass, which was invented by the Carthaginians.

My Pot, to the shrine of Faith,[1] and there to hide thee.
Oh, Faith, we know each other; take good heed
That thou change not thy name, if I do trust thee.
I trust me, Faith, unto thy faithfulness.
[*Exit* EUCLIO *to the temple with the Pot*

*Enter* STROBILUS,[2] *the slave of* LYCONIDES

*Strobilus.* All good slaves may take example, how they should behave, from me;
And not think their master's orders are a bore or injury.
If a slave would serve his master just according to his mind,
He will put his master's interests first and keep his own behind.
Even in the deepest slumber he'll remember he's a slave;
And his eyes will learn to tell him what his master's looks would have;
Then he'll execute his orders faster than with race-horse speed.
If he does so, then the ox-hide ne'er will make his shoulders bleed;
He won't spend his time in making fetters bright with constant wear.
Well, my master loves the daughter of poor Euclio, who lives there;
He's just heard that Megadorus is about to wed his dear;
So to spy out what they're after, he's dispatched and sent me here.
Ah! I'll lounge beside this altar;[3] no one will suspect me then;
Hence I'll see what they are doing and take my master word again.

*Enter* EUCLIO *returning from the temple of Faith where he has hidden the Pot*

*Euc.* Now, good Faith, don't tell a soul that I have put my gold in there;
Nobody will find it now or drag it from its secret lair.
Though if anyone *did* find it, he would get a noble spoil,
For the Pot is crammed with gold. O Faith, frustrate their wicked toil!
Now I'll bathe for sacrifice, that I mayn't cause the least delay
When my kinsman comes to carry my dear daughter home to-day.
Once again, O Faith, I pray thee, keep me safe that Pot of mine;
To thy faith my gold I've trusted, placed it in thy grove and shrine.
[*Exit* EUCLIO *into his house*

*Str.* O ye gods immortal, what a tale is this I've just heard told!
That he's hidden in the temple some big Pot that's crammed with gold!
Faith! to him do thou prove faithless, but be faithful unto me!
Why, I guess, this is the father of my master's love. 'Tis he!
I'll go in and search the temple, see if I can find the gold,
While the old man's busy yonder. Help, O Faith, my theft so bold;
Then a bowl of wine I'll offer, if I only get the pelf,
First I'll offer it to you, and then I'll drink it up myself.
[*Exit* STROBILUS *to the temple*

*Enter* EUCLIO *from his house*

*Euc.* Hist! a raven's crying harshly on the left; oh, it's no joke!
First he cawed and scratched the gravel, then he gave a solemn croak.
Oh, the minute that I heard him, how my heart went pit-a-pat!
I must run and see about it! something's wrong, I'm sure of that.
[*Exit* EUCLIO *to the temple*

*Reënter* EUCLIO, *dragging after him* STROBILUS, *who has not succeeded in finding the Pot*

*Euc.* Out, come out, you worm, you, creeping secretly from underground!
You were hiding just now, were you? Oh, you're done for, now you're found!
Ah, by Hercules! you swindler! see if I don't make you rue.
*Str.* What the devil is the matter?

---

[1] **Faith:** Fides, whose temple stands near Euclio's house.

[2] **Strobilus:** this Strobilus is not the same as the Strobilus of the first three acts. The identity of name is probably due to the fact that the same actor played both the parts.

[3] **altar:** there was always an altar upon the stage. Strobilus intends to appear in the character of an idle loafer who has nothing to do but to bask in the sun.

What have I to do with you?
What are you hitting *me* for, sirrah? Just let go my neckerchief!
*Euc.* Why, most thrashable of mortals! thief, and thief, and three times thief!
*Str.* What have I stolen?
*Euc.* Give it up, sir!
*Str.* Give *what* up?
*Euc.* Come, come, you know!
*Str.* I've not stolen aught of yours.[1]
*Euc.* You'll give it up before you go!
Come, get on.
*Str.* Get on with what?
*Euc.* You can't escape me!
*Str.* What do you want?
*Euc.* Hand it over!
*Str.* That's a phrase with which you're doubtless conversant.[2]
*Euc.* Hand it over! no more chaffing! I've no time for fooleries.
*Str.* Hand *what* over? Name it, man! come, tell me plainly what it is.
Nothing have I touched or taken that is yours.
*Euc.* Then show your hand.
*Str.* There you are!
*Euc.* The other!
*Str.* There, then!
*Euc.* Now the third one I demand!
*Str.* Poor old chap, he's very bad! His wretched wits are quite unsteady.
Sir, you do me wrong!
*Euc.* I do, that I've not had you hanged already.
But you shortly will be if you don't confess.
*Str.* Confess to what?
*Euc.* Tell me what you've stolen from me.
*Str.* Hang me, if I've stolen a jot,
Or have wished to do so, either.
*Euc.* Come on then, shake out your cloak.
*Str.* As you like! [*Shaking his cloak.*]
*Euc.* It's in your shirt, then!
*Str.* Feel me! Have your little joke!
*Euc.* Bah! How ready is the wretch to have his inmost secrets scanned!
But I'm up to all your tricks. Again, sir, show me your right hand.
*Str.* There!
*Euc.* And now the left one show me!
*Str.* Both at once, sir, certainly.
*Euc.* This is useless. Give it here!
*Str.* Give what?
*Euc.* Ah, you are mocking me!
You have got it.
*Str.* Got it? what?
*Euc.* O yes, no doubt, you'd like to hear!
Give me all you've got of mine.
*Str.* You're mad! Why, isn't it quite clear
That I've naught at all about me? You have searched me through and through.
*Euc.* Stay, stay! Who's the other fellow who was there inside with you?
[*Aside.*] 'Sdeath! he's in there robbing me! This fellow will run off, I know,
If I let him.[3] But I've searched him. He's got nothing.
[*Aloud.*] Off you go!
*Str.* Heaven's best curses light upon you!
*Euc.* He's the gratefullest of men!
I'll go in and drag your comrade by his throat from out his den.
Won't you leave my sight? Begone!
*Str.* I'm off!
*Euc.* And don't come back again!
[*Exit* EUCLIO *to the temple*

*Str.* I'd rather die outright in agonies
Than fail to catch the old man in my wiles.
Now he'll not dare to hide his money here;
I guess he'll bring it out to some new place.
Ha, ha! I hear him. There! he's got it with him!
Meanwhile I'll hide myself beside this door.[4]

---

[1] There is a joke here which I cannot get into English. The line runs:
STR. Nil equidem *tibi* abstuli.
EUC. At illud quod *tibi* abstuleras, cedo.

[2] He means that Euclio is a foot-pad.

[3] 'Sdeath . . . him. Euclio imagines that Strobilus has a partner who is still in the temple looking for the Pot. He is satisfied that Strobilus hasn't got it; and therefore thinks it best to let him go, and return to the temple himself to look for his imaginary accomplice.

[4] this door: the door of Megadorus' house.

*Enter* EUCLIO *bringing his Pot from the temple*

*Euc.* I thought I might have put more faith in Faith,
But she has very nearly blacked my nose![1]
Had not the raven helped me, I'd been ruined!
I wish that raven could come here to me,
Who warned me; I would *tell* him something good.
To *give* him food would be as good as lose it.—
I've hit upon the very place of safety!
Outside the walls there is a pathless grove
Filled with dense willows, sacred to Silvanus;[2]
There will I find a spot; I am resolved;
Silvanus will I trust rather than Faith.
[*Exit* EUCLIO *to the grove*

*Str.* Bravo! bravo! the gods are on my side!
I'll run on first and climb up in a tree;
Thence I shall see where Euclio hides his gold.
My master bade me stay *here*, certainly.
But if I get the cash, I'll stand a thrashing.
[*Exit* STROBILUS *to the grove*

*Enter* LYCONIDES *and* EUNOMIA *from the town*

*Lyconides.* Mother, I've told you all; you know as much
As I, about old Euclio's daughter here.
Now I adjure and pray you once again
Go tell it to my uncle, mother dear!
*Eu.* You know that I am heart and soul with you;
I trust I shall prevail upon my brother;
The thing's a fair one, if, as you affirm,
You are engaged to marry Euclio's daughter.
*Lyc.* D'you think I would deceive you, mother mine?
*Eu.* Come in with me, my son, and see my brother;
I'll beg him earnestly to grant your prayer.
*Lyc.* Go in, I'll follow you directly, mother.
[*Exit* EUNOMIA *into* MEGADORUS' *house*
I wonder where my slave Strobilus is.
I bade him wait me here; but now I think on't,
If he's at work for me, I won't be angry.
I'll go in where my fate is being discussed.
[*Exit* LYCONIDES *into* MEGADORUS' *house*

*Enter* STROBILUS *from the grove with the Pot of Gold*

*Str.* I'm richer than the fabled woodpeckers
Who guard the hills of gold! Those other kings,
They're not worth mentioning, the beggarly rascals!
I am the great King Philip![3] O happy day!
When I'd left here, I got there long before him,
And took my station in a lofty tree,
And there I saw where Euclio hid his gold.
When he was gone, I scrambled down the tree,
Dug up the Pot of Gold. But then I spied
The old man coming back; he didn't see me,
For I had slipped a little to one side—
Ha! here he comes! I'll go hide this at home!
[*Exit* STROBILUS *to the house of* LYCONIDES

*Enter* EUCLIO *from the grove*

*Euc.* Oh, I'm lost and undone and destroyed! Where to run? Where to stand? Stop a thief! Ah, but who's to stop whom?[4]
I don't know! I can't see! I've gone blind! Where I am, where to go, who I am, I don't know! All is gloom.
Oh, my mind is distracted, I can't see my way! O help me, O help me, good people, I pray![5]

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[1] **blacked my nose:** to blacken a sleeper's nose with a burnt cork is a trick that still survives.

[2] **Silvanus:** God of the woods, fields, flocks and rural homes.—EDITOR.

[3] **King Philip:** Philip of Macedon, whose gold mines gave him the reputation of great wealth.

[4] Lines 713—725 are anapaestic octonarii:—
⏑ ⏑ — | ⏑ ⏑ — | ⏑ ⏑ — | ⏑ ⏑ — || ⏑ ⏑ — | ⏑ ⏑ — | ⏑ ⏑ — | ⏑ ⏑ —

[5] **O help me . . . I pray.** This is addressed to the audience.

O I beg and beseech you to show me the villain who's taken and stolen my money away.
There is nothing to laugh at. I know you, you wretches! There's lots of you thieves there, in spite of your bluff,
A-sitting and hiding yourselvès in dress clothes so that strangers would think you were honest enough!—[1]
Did you speak, sir? Ah, yes, I am sure I can trust *you!* I see you're a good man. Your face tells me so.—
What, none of you has it?—O sir, you have killed me! Pray tell me who has it?—What's that?—You don't know?—
O wretch that I am! I'm destroyed! I am ruined! There never was man in so sorry a plight!
Such hunger and poverty, groaning and sorrow, this day has brought on me, most pitiful wight!
I'm the woefullest creature alive! what's the use of his life to a man who has lost all his pelf?
I've watched it and guarded it, O so devoutly! labour all lost! I've but cheated myself,
Yea, my heart and my soul! And, at this very moment, another's rejoicing and shouting, the thief,
(Oh, it's past all enduring!) o'er *my* loss and grief!

*Enter* LYCONIDES *from the house of* MEGADORUS

*Lyc.* Who is this who's bawling out before our house like some sad lover?
Why, it's Euclio, I believe! It's all got out! My game is over!
He's found out that we're engaged. Well, I am in a pretty mess!
Which is best, to go or stay? to speak or run? Oh, I can't guess!
*Euc.* Who's that speaking?
*Lyc.* I, poor wretch!
*Euc.* Nay, I'm the wretch who'm standing here!
Woes and troubles rush upon me in such force.
*Lyc.* Be of good cheer!
*Euc.* How can that be, I beseech?
*Lyc.* The crime that troubles you to-day[2]
I committed, I confess it.
*Euc.* What is that I hear you say?
*Lyc.* Simple truth.
*Euc.* And, pray, what evil have you e'er received from me
That you should attempt to ruin me and all my family?
*Lyc.* It was Heaven that drove me to it and enticed me thereto.
*Euc.* How?
*Lyc.* I confess that I'm a sinner, and my grievous fault avow,
And I'm come to you a suppliant who your pardon now implores.
*Euc.* How could you have dared to do it and to touch what wasn't yours?
*Lyc.* What would you have me do? The thing is done and can't be undone now.
Heaven willed it; naught can happen if the gods do not allow.
*Euc.* Yes, and Heaven also willed that I should set you in the stocks.
*Lyc.* Don't say that.
*Euc.* What business had you meddling with my things, you fox?
*Lyc.* It was love and wine that made me.
*Euc.* Wretch of triple insolence!
Do you dare to come and tell me such a tale? What impudence!
Why, if people are permitted in that way to make things right,
We shall steal our ladies' jewels from them in the broad daylight;
Afterwards, if we are caught, we'll make a fine excuse and weep,
Say for love and wine we did it! Love and wine are far too cheap,
If all's lawful to a man, provided he's in love and tight!
*Lyc.* But I've come to beg your pardon and to set the matter right.
*Euc.* I hate men who first do wrong and afterwards apologise.
You'd no business touching what was mine, that's how the matter lies.

---

[1] **A-sitting . . . enough!** Only the wealthier people had seats.

[2] **The crime . . . today.** The confusion between the Pot and the young lady, which gives the point to this dialogue, is greatly helped by the fact that in Latin the same pronoun serves for both, Pot (Aula) being feminine. I have had to translate very freely to keep up the misunderstanding.—EDWARD H. SUGDEN.

*Lyc.* True, I dared to go so far, sir; and I know 'twas wrong; but still,
I'm prepared to stick to it.
*Euc.* What, stick to it against my will?
*Lyc.* O no, not against your will; but still, I think it should be so;
And I think you'll come to see it in that light, good Euclio.
*Euc.* Give it back, or else—
*Lyc.* Give *what* back?
*Euc.* Why, what you have stolen from me.
Or I'll drag you to the judge and enter action presently.
*Lyc.* *I* have stolen from *you?* What is it?
*Euc.* O, Jove bless your innocence!
*You* don't know!
*Lyc.* Of course I don't, unless you speak some clearer sense.
*Euc.* It's that Pot of Gold I'm wanting, which you just confessed to me
You had stolen.
*Lyc.* Never! never!
*Euc.* You deny it?
*Lyc.* Certainly!
Why, I never knew or dreamt about your money or your Pot.
*Euc.* Give it me, I say; the one that from Silvanus' grove you got.
Go and fetch it! See, look here, I'll give you half on't willingly;
Though you've thieved I'll keep it quiet; only bring it back to me.
*Lyc.* O, you're mad to call me thief! The fact was, Euclio, I thought
You'd found out another matter of a very different sort.
I would willingly discuss it at your leisure, if I might.
*Euc.* On your honour, have you stol'n that gold of mine?
*Lyc.* No! honour bright!
*Euc.* Do you know who stole it?
*Lyc.* No, sir!
*Euc.* And if you should get to know
Who has stolen it, will you tell me who it is?
*Lyc.* Yes, I'll do so.
*Euc.* And you'll never help the thief or share it with him?
*Lyc.* Certainly.
*Euc.* If you break your word?
*Lyc.* Then Heaven lay what curse it will on me!
*Euc.* That'll do. Now to your story.
*Lyc.* As you may not be aware
From what family I spring, my uncle's Megadorus there.
I'd Antimachus for father; my own name's Lyconides,
And my mother is Eunomia.
*Euc.* That I know. Your business, please!
*Lyc.* You've a daughter, I believe.
*Euc.* I have, she lives in there with me.
*Lyc.* You've betrothed her to my uncle.
*Euc.* Yes, you have it perfectly.
*Lyc.* He has sent me word to tell you he repudiates the girl.
*Euc.* What, when everything is ready and the feast's prepared, the churl?
Oh, may all the gods in Heaven curse him with a curse untold!
Him through whom I've lost to-day, poor luckless wretch, my store of gold!
*Lyc.* Come, cheer up, don't speak of cursing! There's a thing I hope may be
Good for you and her as well. Heav'n grant it! please, say after me.
*Euc.* Well, Heav'n grant it.
*Lyc.* Yea, Heav'n grant it. Listen, now, to me a while.
When a man has done a wrong, there's no one so entirely vile,
But he blushes when he makes apology; then, hear my plea!
If I've done a wrong to you or to your daughter thoughtlessly,
Pray you, pardon me, and give me for my wife your daughter fair!
It is true, without your knowledge I became engaged to her.
*Euc.* Woe is me, what deed is this I hear you tell?
*Lyc.* Come, don't repine!
For my uncle gave her up just so that she might marry me.
Go in, ask if it's not true.
*Euc.* Alas, I'm ruined utterly!
One misfortune on another comes and sticks to me like glue.

I'll go in and ask about the truth of this.
*Lyc.* I'll follow you.
[*Exit* EUCLIO *into his house*

I'm nearly in the harbour now! I *am* a lucky lover!
But where my slave Strobilus is, I really can't discover;
I'll wait for him a little while; and then I'll just step over
And follow Euclio; meantime he'll find, if he should doubt it,
From the old nurse that I spoke truth; for she knows all about it.

*Entér* STROBILUS

*Str.* Gods immortal, ye have blessed me with illimitable joy!
I've a four-pound Pot of Gold; there's not a richer man than I!
Of all men who live in Athens I'm the luckiest by far!
*Lyc.* Surely I can overhear the voice of someone speaking.
*Str.* Ah!
Do I see my master there?
*Lyc.* Is that my servant that I see?
*Str.* It is he!
*Lyc.* It is no other!
*Str.* I'll accost him!
*Lyc.* Yes, it's he!
I expect that he's been talking, as I bade him, to her nurse.
*Str.* Why not tell him that I've found this booty and my news disburse?
Then I'll ask to be set free. Yes, now I'll go and tell him all.
I have found—
*Lyc.* What have you found?
*Str.* Not what the urchins shout and bawl
They've found in the bean![1]
*Lyc.* I see you're chaffing in your usual way, sir!
*Str.* Stay, I'll tell you all
*Lyc.* Get on then, tell me!
*Str.* I have found to-day, sir,
Boundless riches!
*Lyc.* Where?
*Str.* I've got a four-pound Pot that's full of money!
*Lyc.* What do you say?
*Str.* I've stolen it from old man Euclio! Ain't it funny?
*Lyc.* Where's the gold?
*Str.* In a box at home. So please now, master, set me free!
*Lyc.* Set you free! A likely thing! you lump of foul iniquity!
*Str.* O get out! your dodge I see!
Cunningly I tried your temper! You'd soon find the gold a lodging!
What if I had *really* found it?
*Lyc.* Come, sir, it's no use your dodging.
Fetch the gold!
*Str.* The gold?
*Lyc.* Go, take it to old Euclio!
*Str.* Where'll I get it?
*Lyc.* From the box you told me of.
*Str.* My tongue *does* run on, if I let it!
I've a way of talking nonsense.
*Lyc.* Come, sir, fetch it, or you'll see—
*Str.* You can kill me if you like; but you'll not get it out of me!

[*Here, through an unfortunate gap in the MSS., the play ends. A few fragments of the later portion have survived, from which and the prologue we can gather that Lyconides restored the Pot of Gold to Euclio on condition of receiving his consent to marry his daughter; and that Euclio subsequently bestowed the money upon the young couple to start them in life. This may have been part of the bargain made by Lyconides, or the result of a sudden change in the old miser's temper. Strobilus was doubtless emancipated; and so all ended happily.*]

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[1] **Not what . . . bean:** i.e., Not something of trifling importance. The editors don't seem quite certain what the boys did find in the bean. Some say it was a little worm, called "Midas"; others a certain number of beans, say seven, or nine, which was supposed to be lucky.

## READING LIST

*Phormio*, Terence (Translation of Morris H. Morgan)
*The Captives*, Plautus (Translation of Edward H. Sugden)
*Menaechmi* (The Twins), Plautus (Translation of W. W., 1595)
*The Comedy of Errors*, Shakespeare
*Ralph Royster Doyster*, Nicholas Udall (1551?)

## TOPICS

The Roman Theatre
A Comparison of *The Comedy of Errors* with *The Menaechmi*
The Braggart Soldier as a Stock Figure in Drama: As Exemplified in the *Miles Gloriosus* of Plautus, *Ralph Royster Doyster*, Falstaff in *Henry IV*, Parts I and II, and Captain Bobadil in *Every Man in His Humour* by Ben Jonson
The Influence of Plautus on Renaissance Drama
A Comparison of Seneca's *Trojan Women* with the Play by Euripides
A Comparison of Seneca's *Oedipus* with the Play by Sophocles
A Comparison of Seneca's *Medea* with the Play by Euripides
Shakespeare's Burlesques of Senecan Plays (See, for example, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Act V.)
Fragments of the Roman Historical Dramas by Livius Andronicus, Naevius, Pacuvius, Ennius, Accius
Horace's *Art of Poetry*
Rome under Nero
Mediaeval Mummers and Jongleurs
The Stock Characters in the Italian *Commedia dell' Arte*

# TRANSITION PERIOD

(*From Ancient to Mediaeval*)

The decline of Roman drama was gradual but sure. Although the comedies of Plautus, Terence, and Naevius, and the tragedies of the poets of the second century B.C.,—Ennius, Pacuvius, and Accius, whose works have survived only in fragments—, were presented at the theatres of Rome and in the provinces, plays tended to become subordinate to the spectacles and games given by the Roman aristocrats and consuls for the entertainment of the multitude. Even on the stage the spectacular element was emphasized in crowds of supernumeraries, in dances, and in costumes. The mobs of Rome wanted to be amused in the easiest way,—through the appeal to the eye. They preferred the stimulation of the senses to the inspiration of the intellect. They demanded the thrill of the chariot-race rather than the restraint of the theatre.

Even in the last years of the Republic the audiences preferred *mimes* to plays; such men as Cicero and Mark Antony praised them. These mimes had been introduced from the Greek colonies in southern Italy, the first Latin writers being Publius Syrus and Decius Laberius in the first century B.C. They were based on ridiculous scenes in everyday life, and were accompanied by a rude dialogue and much buffoonery or "slap-stick comedy." They continued to grow in popular favor through the first centuries of the Empire. Women acted in mimes (the word being applied to both play and actor), and often became both rich and influential, the most famous being Theodora, who was afterward the wife of the Emperor Justinian.

In the days of Augustus the more intellectual Romans began to patronize the *pantomimes*, which were something like the modern Russian ballet. In them the actor told the whole plot in his dancing, an art which advanced to a remarkable perfection. With changes of costume and mask he impersonated all of the characters while the dialogue was sung to musical accompaniment by a chorus. The subjects were usually drawn from the love stories of Greek mythology; but great dancers or pantomimes, as they were called, did not hesitate to use the Greek tragedies. In the first century A.D. the poet Lucan was famous for his librettos for these *fabulae salticae* or ballets. During the decline of the Empire pantomimes were all the rage and were introduced at the lavish banquets of the rich. These private presentations continued long after all public theatrical performances had ceased. Both the mimes and the pantomimes were vulgar and indecent, and like the bloody combats in the arena appealed only to a degenerate taste.

In the days of the Empire the taste of the whole Roman nation had become so depraved that nothing but sanguinary shows could satisfy it. Statesmen, poets, and Vestal Virgins as well as the vast crowds of the plebeians thronged to the Circus Maximus to enjoy the excitement of the races; or to the huge amphitheatre of the Coliseum to drink in the cruel spectacle of human butchery. Chariot-racing, gladiatorial combats, wild beast fights, and later the massacre of the Christians, were their brutish amusements. Such audiences craved coarse entertainment. Nothing artistic appealed to them. They wanted buffoonery and grossness rather than psychology and poetry. Drama was too decent to survive.

From the time of Augustus to the fall of Rome serious prose, such as oratory or history or practical treatises, took the ascendancy; the poets preferred satiric or didactic or epic forms to the dramatic. Tragedy, as has been shown in the case of Seneca, allied itself with the art of oratory, and became chiefly rhetorical. Acting deteriorated into elocution or mere gesticulation, or dancing. Theatres were turned into arenas; the stage set forth only spectacles or lewd shows. Drama as living literature sank into the oblivion of convenient exercises in grammars.

Through these centuries Christianity had been gaining more and more of a stronghold until in the reign of Constantine the Great (323–337) it was recognized as the official religion of the Roman Empire. To the early Christians the coarse shows and the corrupt morals of the actors were abominable. There had been great actors at Rome, such as Roscius, the comedian, who died about 62 B.C., and his contemporary Aesopus, the tragedian, both of whom won freedom, wealth, and rank through their art. But these were exceptions; for the situation in Rome was far different from that in Greece where the actor was honored and the drama a religious festival. The Roman actor belonged to a despised and disreputable class; he was denied certain civil and even religious rights; his morals lowered the status of his profession. When, in the course of time, the mimes began to satirize and even burlesque the sacred rites of the growing cult of Christianity, or produced obscene and suggestive scenes based on the worst elements of the pagan mythology which the church was anathematizing, the conflict between church and theatre reached a climax, and in the reign of Constantine an edict was passed abolishing theatrical performances.

Other laws and church canons intended to suppress the theatres were passed. Drama died hard, especially in Byzantium and the Roman provinces; but finally a great blank settles down over the history of the drama. During the succeeding centuries of conflict with the invading barbarians, although the mimes lingered, and literary dramas were occasionally read and acted in patrician circles, yet the theatres fell into ruins, and for more than a thousand years there was no real drama.

In all that time one dramatist alone appears out of the oblivion:—a woman. She was a young German nun of the tenth century, one **Hroswitha** (or Roswitha) of the convent of Gandersheim in Saxony. She wrote six prose comedies modeled on Terence, which were about the lives and martyrdoms of saints. History does not record whether these plays were actually performed by her convent sisters.

What became of the mimes of Rome is not known. Bands of strollers wandered about the Roman world; but these *joculatores*, as they came to be called, were really what their name implies, jugglers or tumblers. The minstrels of the Middle Ages were, perhaps, their lineal descendants, dignified gradually through their amalgamation with the *scôps*, the creative poets of the Teutons, into the gleemen and troubadours who sang with dramatic interpretation the narrative *chansons de geste* or *metrical romances* to their feudal lords. The common folk satisfied their love of incident in the *fabliaux* (the comic narratives of real life) of France, or in the dramatic ballads of England.

In the twelfth to the fifteenth centuries the popular love of action, especially of burlesque and mimicry, found expression throughout Europe in folk-dances, folk-games, and village festivals. Such were the ancient sword-dance, in which winter or death is slain and summer is restored to life; the grotesque and ribald Feast of Fools and Feast of the Ass; as well as the joyous May Day and Twelfth Night celebrations which developed into the Morris Dance and the mummers' play of England. Three fifteenth century dramatizations of *Robin Hood* ballads have survived, as well as several versions of the mummers' play of *St. George*. The mummers acted their play at Christmastide when the revelry of Twelfth Night carried over into Christian times the gay and even licentious Roman festivals of the Saturnalia or of Kalends. Meanwhile the solemn church ceremonies and ritual had implanted in the minds of the people an understanding of interpretative song and action.

Out of these vague nebulae of tradition there was slowly forming the brilliant star of modern European drama that burst in all its splendor upon the Dark Ages in which the great art of the theatre had so long lain dead.

# MEDIAEVAL PERIOD

After a lapse of centuries we find once more a crude but actual drama developing in all the chief countries of Europe. Its origin was independent of previous dramatic tradition. Like the drama of the Greeks, it grew out of the religion of the people, for it originated in the services of the very Christian Church that had suppressed the corrupt theatre of degenerate Rome.

It is impossible to say whether this new form sprang up simultaneously in the churches of mediaeval France, Spain, and England, or whether it began in one place and was carried by the priests to other countries. By the end of the tenth century, at any rate, mimetic interpretations of the high ecclesiastical festivals were in existence throughout Europe.

This new drama developed from the liturgy of the mediaeval church. The antiphonal chant of the introit (the processional psalm before the mass) was acted out by the priests. Then scriptural narrative was incorporated into the Easter service, and the dialogue was sung between two or more of the priests and the choir. This was the so-called *trope.* Since the services were in Latin, the priests began to act out these chants in order that the uneducated worshipers might better understand the story. The best known trope is the so-called *Quem Quaeritis* ("Whom seek ye?"), which was used in Winchester, England, in the latter part of the tenth century. It is a very brief dialogue between the angel at the tomb and the three Marys on Easter morning. These parts were sung by priests; and the Latin rubric for the ritual explains in detail the dramatic action that should accompany the chant. Similarly the services of Christmas, of Epiphany, and of other church holy days were amplified into simple dramatized versions of the Bible narrative. They are called *liturgical mysteries.*

Characters not in the biblical text were sometimes added to make the action and dialogue clearer or more dramatic. The next step was the combining of separate scenes into a unit through the addition of invented connecting incidents until finally the whole story of the life of Christ was enacted. At length episodes from the Old Testament that foreshadowed the coming of Christ were added; thus was completed a *cycle* of *mystery plays* from the Creation to the Day of Judgment. Four of these English *cycles* have been preserved: the York cycle, containing forty-eight plays; the Coventry, containing forty-two; the Chester, containing twenty-four; and the Wakefield (called the Towneley from the name of the family possessing the manuscript), containing thirty. A *mystery* originally dealt only with biblical incidents that were in some way connected with the life of Christ; then *miracle plays* on the lives of the Virgin Mary and Saints were produced; and the term *mystery* (but in England, *miracle*) was applied indiscriminately to both. These plays were acted in England in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries; and were not definitely suppressed until after 1575.

By the thirteenth century these mysteries and miracles were translated from Latin into the tongue of the people. Examples of them occurred in France, England, Spain, Italy, Germany, the Netherlands, and Sweden. In the course of time, when the plays became more elaborate and the spectators more numerous, the priests staged the performances out-of-doors in the precincts of the churches and cathedrals. As more and more material not strictly scriptural was added, and the interpolated comedy became more realistic and more coarse, the clergy eventually ceased to be the actors, and the guilds of the various crafts took over the plays.

When the drama became thus secularized, the guilds undertook the presentation of the entire cycle. Single plays were performed by different guilds or groups

Start h

of guilds, the whole being under the direction of the Town Corporation. In England, for example, the fifty-four miracle plays in the York cycle were given by ninety-six guilds; the twenty-four in the Chester cycle, by twenty-nine guilds. Perhaps it was the sense of humor of these mediaeval artisans that guided the assignments of the plays, but it may have been that the choice was made according to the stock already in hand which would furnish the suitable properties. The Creation of the Earth, for example, was played by the Plasterers; the Building of the Ark, by the Shipwrights; the Deluge, by the Fishmongers; the Coming of the Magi, by the Goldsmiths; the Last Supper, by the Bakers; the Crucifixion, by the Butchers; the Descent into Hell, by the Cooks. The members of the guilds were taxed yearly for the cost of the production, and some of the expense accounts for the making or repairing of various costumes and properties make amusing reading.

After the guilds took over the plays, they were produced at one festival of the church. This was either at Whitsuntide in the late May or early June (seven weeks after Easter), or, more popularly, at the new feast of Corpus Christi, instituted by Pope Urban in 1264, which was the Thursday after Trinity Sunday, ten days later.

The manner of performance of these *mysteries* or *miracles* differed in France and in England. In the former country, the cycle was presented on a succession of days —the mystery of the Acts of the Apostles lasted forty days—and in one set place. This was at first the space in front of the church or cathedral; then on a platform erected in any large open square. The stage was long, and across the back were built the various *mansions* (stations). These represented by façades all the places of the action in heaven, earth, and hell. For example, the Valenciennes stage, in the middle of the sixteenth century, shows at one end Paradise and the throne of God; then Nazareth, the Temple at Jerusalem, the Bishop's palace, the Golden Gate, even a small pond for the Sea of Galilee, and at the extreme left Hellmouth. The latter was a huge dragon's head, into the flaming jaws of which the Devil and his imps finally thrust the lost souls of the wicked. When in 1398 a group of young artisans presented a new *Mystère de la Passion*, they took the name of the "Brotherhood of the Passion," and came to have the monopoly in Paris of these religious plays. They presented them indoors in a hall nearly four times as long as it was wide, on a narrow stage of three tiers, on the center floor of which, representing Palestine, most of the action took place. One play often took many days to present.

In England the stations were represented by separate *pageants*. These were high, two-storied platforms, the lower room serving as a dressing-room for the actors, the second as the stage itself. On each pageant was shown a different play in the cycle. Sometimes the pageants were stationary, and the spectators moved from one to another. Sometimes the platforms were wheeled around from one stopping-place to another. The crowds merely waited for the procession of these floats to pass by, and so saw in one day the entire cycle in chronological order. Each company performed the same play all day long.

In all countries the characteristics of these mediaeval plays were the same. They appealed to the credulity of an unsophisticated people; they were childlike in the mingling of unquestioning faith in the serious parts of the plays, and of the love of fun in the interpolated incidents.

Later than the miracle and mystery plays, but having its source in the comic episodes of these cycles combined with the mediaeval love of allegory, came the *morality*. In this the entire plot was invented. The characters were personified virtues and vices, and the story an allegory of the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil. The *moralities* were dramatized sermons, often dull and long-winded, but enlivened by the pranks of the Devil and his attendant Vice. The latter is held to be the historical progenitor of the fool in Shakespeare's plays. In the time of Henry VIII the morality changed from a purely religious play to a moral, educational, or even political type.

In *France* the secular drama developed along the lines of comedy. From the *fabliaux* (the comic and realistic verse-tales popular in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries) evolved the *sotties* and the *farces*. The former were comic satires, usually political in intent, presented by a group of young courtiers called the *Enfants sans Souci*. The farces were based upon incidents in the daily life of the people, and contained much buffoonery. The best-known example of the farce is *Master Peter Patelin* (*L'Avocat Patelin* or *Maistre Pierre Pathelin*) written about 1465. This contains shrewd character drawing and clever lines, as well as a really amusing plot. But in many of the farces, the humor is about on a par with that of modern newspaper "comics," and much the same characters appear, such as the scolding wife, the henpecked husband, and the interfering mother-in-law. In fact, the so-called "comedies" of the moving pictures are still in the Dark Ages of humor. They resort to the "slap-stick" antics of the buffoon. Their medium is exaggeration both in caricature of the *dramatis personæ* and in the farcicality of the plot, which exceeds the bounds of the most far-fetched probability.

The moralities, the farces, and later the sotties, were performed in Paris in the hall of the Palais de Justice by a guild of law clerks established in the thirteenth century, called the *Clercs de la Basoche;* whereas the religious mysteries proper were in the control of the *Brotherhood of the Passion* (*Confrèrie de la Passion*) until, because of their indecency, they were abolished by decree in 1548.

In *Germany*, as in England and France, the religious drama fell into the hands of the Guilds, and then into those of the *Mastersingers* (*Meistersingers*). Of these the most celebrated was the shoemaker poet of Nuremberg, **Hans Sachs** (1494–1576), whose *Fastnachtspiele* (*Plays for Shrove Tuesday*) gained him the title of the father of German drama. His plays are little dramas on all kinds of subjects; but they are more narrative than dramatic. The followers of Hans Sachs were few. The Reformation diverted the thoughts of the people to serious religious and political controversy. German drama in the seventeenth century instead of becoming a national art, took the form of imitations of English and Italian Renaissance drama, until with the outbreak of civil war—The Thirty Years War, 1618–1648—the effects of which lasted for nearly a century, the development of any real drama was checked until well after the beginning of the eighteenth century.

The conventionalized abstractions that were the *dramatis personæ* of the moralities tended to become more and more concrete characterizations of real men and women. Historical and legendary personages also were introduced. Thus plot and characterization were ripe for transformation into actual drama.

In *England* familiarity with the popular ballads helped to foster a love of dramatic incident and an easy comprehension of direct and condensed dramatic form. To the Tudor Court is due a new consciously artistic type of play called the *interlude*,[1] the purpose of which was not to instruct but to entertain. It was created by **John Heywood** (1497–1585? ), the court poet and master of the Children of the Chapel Royal in the reigns of Henry VIII and Mary Tudor. In the interlude, the amusing characters and scenes were drawn from everyday life and told in the homely speech of the people. The court interludes were performed by the highly trained Children of the Chapel Royal, a group of carefully chosen boys who received their education in return for their services in the royal choir and at court festivals. Later poets adapted both moralities and classical myths to the abilities of the boy actors of the great London schools, such as Westminster or St. Paul's, and of the students of Oxford and Cambridge; or to the amateur abilities of lawyers of the Inns of Court. The Interludes and other court plays form the intermediate step in the history of English drama from the morality plays to the real drama of the Elizabethan era.

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[1] The term interlude is also used to indicate any sketch or any incident in a miracle play, introduced solely for entertainment. In this sense the episode of Mak in the *Second Shepherds' Play* of the Towneley Cycle may be called an interlude.

Throughout the thirteenth, fourteenth, fifteenth centuries and most of the sixteenth, drama in Europe was in the hands of amateurs, at first, priests, then craftsmen and clerks, courtiers and schoolboys. When in the sixteenth century trained playwrights and professional actors began the production of plays, folk-drama came to an end, and a new age of artistic drama dawned.

## THE SECOND SHEPHERDS' PLAY

(Secunda Pastorum)

From the Towneley Ms. of the Wakefield Cycle

(Translation and notes by Clarence Griffin Child[1])

*Middle of the Fifteenth Century(?)*

CHARACTERS

Coll, *the First Shepherd* (*Primus Pastor*)
Gib, *the Second Shepherd* (*Secundus Pastor*)
Daw, *the Third Shepherd* (*Tertius Pastor*)
Mak, *the Sheep-stealer*
Gill, *Mak's wife*
Mary (*Maria*)
The Christ Child
An Angel (*Angelus*)

*The* First Shepherd (*Primus Pastor*) *enters*

*Primus Pastor.* Lord, but this weather is cold, and I am ill wrapped!
Nigh dazed, were the truth told, so long have I napped;
My legs under me fold; my fingers are chapped—
With such like I don't hold, for I am all lapt
In sorrow.
In storms and tempest,
Now in the east, now in the west,
Woe is him has never rest
Midday nor morrow!

But we seely[2] shepherds that walk on the moor,
In faith we're nigh at hand to be put out of door.
No wonder, as it doth stand, if we be poor,
For the tilth of our land lies fallow as the floor,
As ye ken.
We're so burdened and banned,
Over-taxed and unmanned,
We're made tame to the hand
Of these gentry men.

Thus they rob us of our rest, our Lady them harry!
These men bound to their lords' behest, they make the plough tarry,
What men say is for the best, we find the contrary,—
Thus are husbandmen oppressed, in point to miscarry,
In life,
Thus hold they us under
And from comfort sunder.
It were great wonder,
If ever we should thrive.

For if a man may get an embroidered sleeve or a brooch now-a-days,
Woe is him that may him grieve, or a word in answer says!

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[2] seely: blameless and to be pitied; "poor."

No blame may he receive, whatever pride he displays;
And yet may no man believe one word that he says,
Not a letter.
His daily needs are gained
By boasts and bragging feigned,
And in all he's maintained
By men that are greater.

Proud shall come a swain as a peacock may go,
He must borrow my wain, my plough also,
Then I am full fain to grant it ere he go.
Thus live we in pain, anger, and woe
By night and day!
He must have it, if he choose,
Though I should it lose,
I were better hanged than refuse,
Or once say him nay!

It does me good as I walk thus alone
Of this world for to talk and to make my moan.
To my sheep will I stalk, and hearken anon,
There wait on a balk,[1] or sit on a stone.
Full soon,
For I trow, pardie,
True men if they be,
We shall have company,
Ere it be noon.

[*The* First Shepherd *goes out* (*or to one side*).

*The* Second Shepherd *enters*

*Secundus Pastor*. Ben'cite[2] and Dominus! What may this mean?
Why fares the world thus! The like often we've seen!
Lord, but it is spiteful and grievous, this weather so keen!
And the frost so hideous—it waters mine een!
That's no lie!
Now in dry, now in wet,
Now in snow, now in sleet,
When my shoes freeze to my feet,
It's not all easy!

But so far as I ken, wherever I go,
We seely wedded men suffer mickle woe,
We have sorrow once and again, it befalls oft so.
Seely Capel, our hen, both to and fro
She cackles,
But if she begins to croak,
To grumble or cluck,
Then woe be to our cock,
For he is in the shackles![3]

These men that are wed have not all their will;
When they're full hard bestead, they sigh mighty still;
God knows the life they are led is full hard and full ill,
Nor thereof in bower or bed may they speak their will,
This tide.
My share I have found,
Know my lesson all round,
Wo is him that is bound,
For he must it abide!

But now late in men's lives (such a marvel to me
That I think my heart rives[4] such wonders to see,
How that destiny drives that it should so be!)
Some men will have two wives and some men three
In store.
Some are grieved that have any,
But I'll wager my penny
Woe is him that has many,
For he feels sore!

But young men as to wooing, for God's sake that you bought,
Beware well of wedding, and hold well in thought,
"Had I known" is a thing that serves you nought.
Much silent sorrowing has a wedding home brought,
And grief gives,
With many a sharp shower—
For thou mayest catch in an hour
What shall taste thee full sour
As long as one lives!

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[1] **balk:** a ridge or hillock.

[2] **Ben'cite:** shortened form of *benedicite*—"bless you!"—frequent in mediaeval use both as a salutation and exclamation (compare modern "bless us!").

[3] **in the shackles:** i.e., in a tight place, under constraint to take what he gets.

[4] **rives:** breaks.

For—if ever read I epistle!—I have one by my fire,
As sharp as a thistle, as rough as a briar,
She has brows like a bristle and a sour face by her;
If she had once wet her whistle, she might sing clearer and higher
Her pater-noster;
She is as big as a whale,
She has a gallon of gall,—
By him that died for us all,
I wish I had run till I had lost her!

*Pri. Pas.* "God look over the row!"[1] like a deaf man ye stand.
*Sec. Pas.* Yea, sluggard, the devil thy maw burn with his brand!
Didst see aught of Daw?
*Pri. Pas.* Yea, on the pasture-land
I heard him blow just before; he comes nigh at hand
Below there.
Stand still.
*Sec. Pas.* Why?
*Pri. Pas.* For he comes, hope I.
*Sec. Pas.* He'll catch us both with some lie
Unless we beware.

*The* THIRD SHEPHERD *enters, at first without seeing them*

*Tertius Pastor.* Christ's cross me speed and St. Nicholas!
Thereof in sooth I had need, it is worse than it was.
Whoso hath knowledge, take heed, and let the world pass,
You may never trust it, indeed,—it's as brittle as glass,
As it rangeth.[2]
Never before fared this world so,
With marvels that greater grow,
Now in weal, now in woe,
And everything changeth.

There was never since Noah's flood such floods seen,
Winds and rains so rude and storms so keen;
Some stammered, some stood in doubt, as I ween.—
Now God turn all to good, I say as I mean!
For ponder
How these floods all drown
Both in fields and in town,
And bear all down,
And that is a wonder!

We that walk of nights our cattle to keep,
[*Catches sight of the others.*]
We see startling sights when other men sleep.
Yet my heart grows more light—I see shrews[3] a-peep.
Ye are two tall wights—I will give my sheep
A turn, below.
But my mood is ill-sent;
As I walk on this bent,[4]
I may lightly repent,
If I stub my toe.

Ah, Sir, God you save and my master sweet!
A drink I crave, and somewhat to eat.
*Pri. Pas.* Christ's curse, my knave, thou'rt a lazy cheat!
*Sec. Pas.* Lo, the boy lists to rave!
Wait till later for meat,
We have eat it.
Ill thrift on thy pate!
Though the rogue came late,
Yet is he in state
To eat, could he get it.

*Ter. Pas.* That such servants as I, that sweat and swink,[5]
Eat our bread full dry gives me reason to think.
Wet and weary we sigh while our masters wink,[6]
Yet full late we come by our dinner and drink—
But soon thereto
Our dame and sire,
When we've run in the mire,
Take a nip from our hire,
And pay slow as they care to.

---

[1] **God . . . . row:** no satisfactory explanation has been offered for this phrase, obviously a proverbial exclamation.

[2] **rangeth:** original. *slithers*, slides away.

[3] **shrews:** rascals.

[4] **bent:** unenclosed pasture, heath; a Northern use.

[5] **swink:** toil.

[6] **wink:** sleep.

But hear my oath, master, since you find fault this way,
I shall do this hereafter—work to fit my pay;
I'll do just so much, sir, and now and then play,
For never yet supper in my stomach lay
In the fields.
But why dispute so?
Off with staff I can go.
"Easy bargain," men say,
"But a poor return yields."

*Pri. Pas.* Thou wert an ill lad for work to ride wooing
From a man that had but little for spending.
*Sec. Pas.* Peace, boy, I bade! No more jangling,
Or I'll make thee full sad, by the Heaven's King,
With thy gauds![1]
Where are our sheep, boy? Left lorn?[2]
*Ter. Pas.* Sir, this same day at morn,
I them left in the corn
When they rang Lauds.[3]

They have pasture good, they cannot go wrong.
*Pri. Pas.* That is right. By the Rood, these nights are long!
Ere we go now, I would someone gave us a song.
*Sec. Pas.* So I thought as I stood, to beguile us along.
*Ter. Pas.* I agree.
*Pri. Pas.* The tenor I'll try.
*Sec. Pas.* And I the treble so high.
*Ter. Pas.* Then the mean shall be I.
How ye chant now, let's see!
*They sing* (*the song is not given*).

*Tunc entrat Mak, in clamide se super togam vestitus*[4]

*Mak.* Now, Lord, by thy seven names' spell,[5] that made both moon and stars on high,
Full more than I can tell, by thy will for me, Lord, lack I.
I am all at odds, nought goes well—that oft doth my temper try.
Now would God I might in heaven dwell, for there no children cry,
So still.
*Pri. Pas.* Who is that pipes so poor?
*Mak.* Would God ye knew what I endure!
*Pri. Pas.* Lo, a man that walks on the moor,
And has not all his will!

*Sec. Pas.* Mak, whither dost speed? What news do you bring?
*Ter. Pas.* Is he come? Then take heed each one to his thing.
[*Et accipit clamiden ab ipso.*[6]]
*Mak.* What! I am a yeoman—since there's need I should tell you—of the King,
That self-same, indeed, messenger from a great lording,
And the like thereby.
Fie on you! Go hence
Out of my presence!
I must have reverence,
And you ask "who am I!"

*Pri. Pas.* Why dress ye it up so quaint? Mak, ye do ill!
*Sec. Pas.* But, Mak, listen, ye saint, I believe what ye will!
*Ter. Pas.* I trow the knave can feint, by the neck the devil him kill!
*Mak.* I shall make complaint, and you'll all get your fill,
At a word from me—
And tell your doings, forsooth!
*Pri. Pas.* But, Mak, is that truth?
Now take out that southern tooth
And stick in a flea![7]

*Sec. Pas.* Mak, the devil be in your eye, verily! to a blow I'd fain treat you
*Ter. Pas.* Mak, know you not me? By God, I could beat you!

---

[1] **gauds:** pranks, tricks, jokes.

[2] **Left lorn:** lost.

[3] **Lauds:** the first of the canonical hours of daily service.

[4] **Tunc . . . vestitus.** Then enters Mak, who has put on a cloak above his ordinary dress.

[5] **seven names' spell:** There are seven names for God in Rabbinical literature.

[6] **Et . . . ab ipso.** And takes the cloak off him.

[7] **southern tooth . . . flea!** Implying deceit in Mak's mouth like that of South of England folk—the play being Northern, and deceit being proverbially attributed to the South by the North.

*Mak.* God keep you all three! Me thought I had seen you—
I greet you,
Ye are a fair company!
*Pri. Pas.* Oh, now you remember, you cheat, you!
*Sec. Pas.* Shrew, jokes are cheap!
When thus late a man goes,
What will folk suppose?—
You’ve a bad name, God knows,
For stealing of sheep!

*Mak.* And true as steel am I, all men know and say,
But a sickness I feel, verily, that grips me hard, night and day.
My belly is all awry, it is out of play—
*Ter. Pas.* “Seldom doth the Devil lie dead by the way—”
*Mak.* Therefore
Full sore am I and ill,
Though I stand stone still;
I’ve not eat a needle[1]
This month and more.

*Pri. Pas.* How fares thy wife, by my hood, how fares she, ask I?
*Mak.* Lies asprawl, by the Rood, lo, the fire close by,
And a house-full of home-brewed she drinks full nigh—
Ill may speed any good thing that she will try
Else to do!—
Eats as fast as may be,
And each year there’ll a day be
She brings forth a baby,
And some years two.

But were I now kinder, d’ye hear, and far richer in purse,
Still were I eaten clear out of house and home, sirs.
And she’s a foul-favored dear, see her close, by God’s curse!
No one knows or may hear, I trow, of a worse,
Not any!
Now will ye see what I proffer?—
To give all in my coffer,
To-morrow next to offer
Her head-mass penny.[2]

*Sec. Pas.* Faith, so weary and worn is there none in this shire.
I must sleep, were I shorn of a part of my hire.
*Ter. Pas.* I’m naked, cold, and forlorn, and would fain have a fire.
*Pri. Pas.* I’m clean spent, for, since morn, I’ve run in the mire.
Watch thou, do!
*Sec. Pas.* Nay, I’ll lie down hereby,
For I must sleep, truly.
*Ter. Pas.* As good a man’s son was I,
As any of you!

[*They prepare to lie down.*]
But, Mak, come lie here in between, if you please.
*Mak.* You’ll be hindered, I fear, from talking at ease,
Indeed!
[*He yields and lies down.*]
From my top to my toe,
*Manus tuas commendo,*
*Poncio Pilato,*[3]
Christ’s cross me speed!

[*Tunc surgit, pastoribus dormientibus, et dicit:*[4]]
Now ’t were time a man knew, that lacks what he’d fain hold,
To steal privily through then into a fold,
And then nimbly his work do—and be not too bold,
For his bargain he’d rue, if it were told
At the ending
Now ’t were time their wrath to tell!—[5]
But he needs good counsel
That fain would fare well,
And has but little for spending.

But about you a circle as round as a moon,
[*He draws the circle.*]
Till I have done what I will, till that it be noon,
That ye lie stone still, until I have done;
And I shall say thereto still, a few good words soon

---

[1] **a needle:** a tiny bit.

[2] **. . . head-mass penny.** “If I could but pay for her burial mass!”

[3] **Manus . . . Pilato:** Into thy hands, Pontius Pilate, I commend me. [Mak’s theology is about on a par with his Latin! Ed.]

[4] **Tunc . . . dicit:** Then he rises, when the shepherds are asleep, and says:

[5] **Now . . . tell!** “Now ’twere time for the shepherds, if they knew what I was up to, to rail!”

Of might:
Over your heads my hand I lift.
Out go your eyes! Blind be your sight!
But I must make still better shift,
If it's to be right.

Lord, how hard they sleep—that may ye all hear!
I never herded sheep, but I'll learn now, that's clear.
Though the flock be scared a heap, yet shall I slip near.
[*He captures a sheep.*]
Hey—hitherward creep! Now that betters our cheer
From sorrow.
A fat sheep, I dare say!
A good fleece, swear I may!
When I can, then I'll pay,
But this I will borrow!

MAK *goes to his house, and knocks at the door.*

*Mak.* Ho, Gill, art thou in? Get us a light!
*Uxor Eius.*[1] Who makes such a din at this time of night?
I am set for to spin, I think not I might
Rise a penny to win! Curses loud on them light
Trouble cause!
A busy house-wife all day
To be called thus away!
No work's done, I say,
Because of such small chores!

*Mak.* The door open, good Gill. See'st thou not what I bring?
*Uxor.* Draw the latch, an thou will. Ah, come in, my sweeting!
*Mak.* Yea, thou need'st not care didst thou kill me with such long standing!
*Uxor.* By the naked neck still thou art likely to swing.
*Mak.* Oh, get away!
I am worthy of my meat,
For at a pinch I can get
More than they that swink[2] and sweat
All the long day.

Thus it fell to my lot, Gill! Such luck came my way!
*Uxor.* It were a foul blot to be hanged for it some day.
*Mak.* I have often escaped, Gillot, as risky a play.
*Uxor.* But "though long goes the pot to the water," men say,
"At last
Comes it home broken."
*Mak.* Well know I the token,
But let it never be spoken—
But come and help fast!

I would he were slain, I would like well to eat,
This twelvemonth was I not so fain to have some sheep's meat.
*Uxor.* Should they come ere he's slain and hear the sheep bleat—
*Mak.* Then might I be ta'en. That were a cold sweat!
The door—
Go close it!
*Uxor.* Yes, Mak,—
For if they come at thy back—
*Mak.* Then might I suffer from the whole pack
The devil, and more!

*Uxor.* A good trick have I spied, since thou thinkest of none,
Here shall we him hide until they be gone—
In my cradle he'll bide—just you let me alone—
And I shall lie beside in childbed and groan.
*Mak.* Well said!
And I shall say that this night
A boy child saw the light.
*Uxor.* Now that day was bright
That saw me born and bred!

This is a good device and a far cast.[3]
Ever a woman's advice gives help at the last!
I care not who spies! Now go thou back fast!
*Mak.* Save I come ere they rise, there'll blow a cold blast!

---

[1] **Uxor Eius:** his wife.
[2] **swink:** work
[3] **far cast:** far-fetched (clever) trick.

[Mak *goes back to the moor, and prepares to lie down.*]
I will go sleep.
Still sleeps all this company,
And I shall slip in privily
As it had never been I
That carried off their sheep.

*Pri. Pas.* *Resurrex a mortruis!*[1] Reach me a hand!
*Judas carnas dominus!*[1] I can hardly stand!
My foot's asleep, by Jesus, and my mouth's dry as sand.
I thought we had laid us full nigh to England!
*Sec. Pas.* Yea, verily!
Lord, but I have slept well.
As fresh as an eel,
As light do I feel,
As leaf on the tree.

*Ter. Pas.* Ben'cite be herein! So my body is quaking,
My heart is out of my skin with the to-do it's making.
Who's making all this din, so my head's set to aching.
To the doer I'll win! Hark, you fellows, be waking!
Four we were—
See ye aught of Mak now?
*Pri. Pas.* We were up ere thou.
*Sec. Pas.* Man, to God I vow,
Not once did he stir.

*Ter. Pas.* Methought he was lapt in a wolf's skin.
*Pri. Pas.* So many are wrapped now — namely within.
*Ter. Pas.* When we had long napped, methought with a gin
A fat sheep he trapped, but he made no din.
*Sec. Pas.* Be still!
Thy dream makes thee mad,
It's a nightmare you've had.
*Pri. Pas.* God bring good out of bad,
If it be his will!

*Sec. Pas.* Rise, Mak, for shame!
Right long dost thou lie.
*Mak.* Now Christ's Holy Name be with us for aye!
What's this, by Saint James, I can't move when I try.
I suppose I'm the same. Oo-o, my neck's lain awry
Enough, perdie—
Many thanks!—since yester even.
Now, by Saint Stephen,
I was plagued by a sweven,[2]
Knocked the heart of me.

I thought Gill begun to croak and travail full sad,
Well-nigh at the first cock, with a young lad
To add to our flock. Of that I am never glad,
I have "tow on my rock more than ever I had."[3]
Oh, my head!
A house full of young banes—
The devil knock out their brains!
Wo is him many gains,
And thereto little bread.

I must go home, by your leave, to Gill, as I thought.
Prithee look in my sleeve that I steal naught.
I am loath you to grieve, or from you take aught.
*Ter. Pas.* Go forth—ill may'st thou thrive!
[Mak *goes*
Now I would that we sought
This morn,
That we had all our store.
*Pri. Pas.* But I will go before.
Let us meet.
*Sec. Pas.* Where, Daw?
*Ter. Pas.* At the crooked thorn.
[*They go out*

Mak *enters and knocks at his door*
*Mak.* Undo the door, see who's here!
How long must I stand?
*Uxor.* Who's making such gear?
Now "walk in the wenyand."[4]
*Mak.* Ah, Gill, what cheer? It is I,
Mak, your husband.

---

[1] Resurrex a mortruis . . . Judas carnas dominus! [Coll thinks he is talking Latin. Ed.]

[2] sweven: dream.

[3] tow . . . I had: More to look out for.

[4] in the wenyand: in the waning-moon; i.e., where bad luck may attend you.

*Uxor.* Then may we "see here the devil in a band,"[1]
Sir Guile!
Lo, he comes with a note
As he were held by the throat.
And I cannot devote
To my work any while.

*Mak.* Will ye hear the pother she makes to get her a gloze[2]—
Naught but pleasure she takes, and curls up her toes.
*Uxor.* Why, who runs, who wakes,[3] who comes, who goes,
Who brews, who bakes, what makes me hoarse, d'ye suppose!
And also,
It is ruth to behold,
Now in hot, now in cold,
Full woeful is the household
That no woman doth know!

But what end hast thou made with the shepherds, Mak?
*Mak.* The last word that they said when I turned my back
Was they'd see that they had of their sheep all the pack.
They'll not be pleased, I'm afraid, when they their sheep lack,
Perdie.
But how so the game go,
They'll suspect me, whether or no,
And raise a great bellow,
And cry out upon me.

But thou must use thy sleight.
*Uxor.* Yea, I think it not ill.
I shall swaddle him aright in my cradle with skill.
Were it yet a worse plight, yet a way I'd find still.

[GILL *meanwhile swaddles the sheep and places him in the cradle.*]

I will lie down forthright. Come tuck me up.
*Mak.* That I will.
*Uxor.* Behind!
[MAK *tucks her in at the back.*]
If Coll come and his marrow,[4]
They will nip us full narrow.
*Mak.* But I may cry out "Haro,"[5]
The sheep if they find.

*Uxor.* Hearken close till they call—they will come anon.
Come and make ready all, and sing thou alone—
Sing lullaby, thou shalt, for I must groan
And cry out by the wall on Mary and John
Full sore.
Sing lullaby on fast,
When thou hear'st them at last,
And, save I play a shrewd cast,
Trust me no more.

*The* SHEPHERDS *enter on the moor and meet*

*Ter. Pas.* Ah, Coll, good morn! Why sleepest thou not?
*Pri. Pas.* Alas, that ever I was born!
We have a foul blot.
A fat wether have we lorn.
*Ter. Pas.* Marry, God forbid, say it not!
*Sec. Pas.* Who should do us that scorn?[6] That were a foul spot.
*Pri. Pas.* Some shrew!
I have sought with my dogs
All Horbury Shrogs,[7]
And of fifteen hogs[8]
Found I all but one ewe.

*Ter. Pas.* Now trust me, if you will, by Saint Thomas of Kent,
Either Mak or Gill their aid thereto lent!
*Pri. Pas.* Peace, man, be still! I saw when he went.
Thou dost slander him ill. Thou shouldest repent
At once, indeed!
*Sec. Pas.* So may I thrive, perdie,
Should I die here where I be,
I would say it was he
That did that same deed!

---

[1] "see . . . band." Perhaps meaning, "There's the devil to pay!"
[2] gloze: excuse.
[3] wakes: watches.
[4] marrow: company.
[5] Haro: Woe's me! Help!
[6] scorn: evil trick.
[7] Shrogs: thickets. Horbury is a town near Wakefield with which the Towneley Cycle is identified.
[8] hogs: young sheep.

*Ter. Pas.* Go we thither, quick sped, and run on our feet,
I shall never eat bread till I know all complete!
*Pri. Pas.* Nor drink in my head till with him I meet.
*Sec. Pas.* In no place will I bed until I him greet,
My brother!
One vow I will plight,
Till I see him in sight,
I will ne'er sleep one night
Where I do another!

*They go to Mak's house.* MAK, *hearing them coming, begins to sing lullaby at the top of his voice, while* GILL *groans in concert.*

*Ter. Pas.* Hark the row they make! List our sire there croon!
*Pri. Pas.* Never heard I voice break so clear out of tune.
Call to him.
*Sec. Pas.* Mak, wake there! Undo your door soon!
*Mak.* Who is that spake as if it were noon?
Aloft?
Who is that, I say?
*Ter. Pas.* [*mocking* MAK]. Good fellows, if it were day—
*Mak.* As far as ye may,
Kindly, speak soft;

O'er a sick woman's head in such grievous throes!
I were liefer dead than she should suffer such woes.
*Uxor.* Go elsewhere, well sped. Oh, how my pain grows—
Each footfall ye tread goes straight through my nose
So loud, woe's me!
*Pri. Pas.* Tell us, Mak, if ye may,
How fare ye, I say?
*Mak.* But are ye in this town to-day—
Now how fare ye?

Ye have run in the mire and are wet still a bit,
I will make you a fire, if ye will sit.
A nurse I would hire—can you help me in it?
Well quit is my hire—my dream the truth hit—
In season
I have bairns, if ye knew,
Plenty more than will do,
But we must drink as we brew,
And that is but reason.

I would ye would eat ere ye go. Methinks that ye sweat.
*Sec. Pas.* Nay, no help could we know in what's drunken or eat.
*Mak.* Why, sir, ails you aught but good, though?
*Ter. Pas.* Yea, our sheep that we get
Are stolen as they go; our loss is great.
*Mak.* Sirs, drink!
Had I been there,
Some one had bought it sore, I swear.
*Pri. Pas.* Marry, some men trow that ye were,
And that makes us think!

*Sec. Pas.* Mak, one and another trows it should be ye.
*Ter. Pas.* Either ye or your spouse, so say we.
*Mak.* Now if aught suspicion throws on Gill or me,
Come and search our house, and then may ye see
Who had her—
If I any sheep got,
Or cow or stot;[1]
And Gill, my wife, rose not,
Here since we laid her.

As I am true and leal, to God, here I pray
That this is the first meal that I shall eat this day.
*Pri. Pas.* Mak, as may I have weal, advise thee, I say—
"He learned timely to steal that could not say nay."
*Uxor.* Me, my death you've dealt!
Out, ye thieves, nor come again,
Ye've come just to rob us, that's plain.
*Mak.* Hear ye not how she groans amain—
Your hearts should melt!

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[1] stot: bullock.

*Uxor.* From my child, thieves, begone. Go nigh him not,—there's the door!
*Mak.* If ye knew all she's borne, your hearts would be sore.
Ye do wrong, I you warn, thus to come in before
A woman that has borne—but I say no more.
*Uxor.* Oh, my middle—I die!
I vow to God so mild,
If ever I you beguiled,
That I will eat this child
That doth in this cradle lie!

*Mak.* Peace, woman, by God's pain, and cry not so.
Thou dost hurt thy brain and fill me with woe.
*Sec. Pas.* I trow our sheep is slain. What find ye two, though?
Our work's all in vain. We may as well go.
Save clothes and such matters
I can find no flesh
Hard or nesh,[1]
Salt nor fresh,
Except two empty platters.

Of any "cattle" but this, tame or wild, that we see,
None, as may I have bliss, smelled as loud as he.
*Uxor.* No, so God joy and bliss of my child may give me!
*Pri. Pas.* We have aimed amiss; deceived, I trow, were we.
*Sec. Pas.* Sir, wholly each, one.
Sir, Our Lady him save!
Is your child a knave?[2]
*Mak.* Any lord might him have,
This child, for his son.

When he wakes, so he grips, it's a pleasure to see.
*Ter. Pas.* Good luck to his hips,[3] and blessing, say we!
But who were his gossips,[4] now tell who they be?
*Mak.* Blest be their lips—[*Hesitates, at a loss.*]
*Pri. Pas.* [*aside*]. Hark a lie now, trust me!
*Mak.* So may God them thank,
Parkin and Gibbon Waller, I say,
And gentle John Horn, in good fey—[5]
He made all the fun and play—
With the great shank.[6]

*Sec. Pas.* Mak, friends will we be, for we are at one.
*Mak.* We!—nay, count not on me, for amends get I none.
Farewell, all three! Glad 't will be when ye're gone!
[*The* SHEPHERDS *go*

*Ter. Pas.* "Fair words there may be, but love there is none
This year."
*Pri. Pas.* Gave ye the child anything?
*Sec. Pas.* I trow, not one farthing.
*Ter. Pas.* Fast back I will fling.
Await ye me here.

DAW *goes back. The other* SHEPHERDS *turn and follow him slowly, entering while he is talking with* MAK.

*Ter. Pas.* Mak, I trust thou'lt not grieve, if I go to thy child.
*Mak.* Nay, great hurt I receive,—thou hast acted full wild.
*Ter. Pas.* Thy bairn 't will not grieve, little day-star so mild.
Mak, by your leave, let me give your child
But six-pence.

DAW *goes to cradle, and starts to draw away the covering.*

*Mak.* Nay, stop it—he sleeps!
*Ter. Pas.* Methinks he peeps—
*Mak.* When he wakens, he weeps;
I pray you go hence!

*The other* SHEPHERDS *return*

*Ter. Pas.* Give me leave him to kiss, and lift up the clout.[7]
What the devil is this?—he has a long snout!
*Pri. Pas.* He's birth-marked amiss. We waste time hereabout.
*Sec. Pas.* "A weft that ill-spun is comes ever foul out."

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[1] nesh: tender.
[2] knave: boy.
[3] hips typify the whole body.
[4] gossips: sponsors.
[5] fey: faith.
[6] great shank: long legs.
[7] clout: cloth.

[*He sees the sheep.*]
Aye—so!
He is like to our sheep!
*Ter. Pas.* Ho, Gib, may I peep?
*Pri. Pas.* I trow "Nature will creep
Where it may not go."[1]

*Sec. Pas.* This was a quaint gaud[2] and a far cast.
It was a high fraud.
*Ter. Pas.* Yea, sirs, that was 't.
Let's burn this bawd, and bind her fast.
"A false scold," by the Lord, "will hang at the last!"
So shalt thou!
Will ye see how they swaddle
His four feet in the middle!
Saw I never in the cradle
A horned lad ere now!

*Mak.* Peace, I say! Tell ye what, this to-do ye can spare!
[*Pretending anger.*]
It was I him begot and yon woman him bare.
*Pri. Pas.* What the devil for name has he got? Mak?—Lo, God, Mak's heir!
*Sec. Pas.* Come, joke with him not. Now, may God give him care,
I say!
*Uxor.* A pretty child is he
As sits on a woman's knee,
A dilly-down,[3] perdie,
To make a man gay.

*Ter. Pas.* I know him by the ear-mark—that is a good token.
*Mak.* I tell you, sirs, hark, his nose was broken—
Then there told me a clerk he'd been mis-spoken.[4]
*Pri. Pas.* Ye deal falsely and dark; I would fain be wroken.[5]
Get a weapon,—go!
*Uxor.* He was taken by an elf,
I saw it myself.
When the clock struck twelve,
Was he mis-shapen so.

*Sec. Pas.* Ye two are at one, that's plain, in all ye've done and said.
*Pri. Pas.* Since their theft they maintain, let us leave them dead!
*Mak.* If I trespass again, strike off my head!
At your will I remain.
*Ter. Pas.* Sirs, take my counsel instead.
For this trespass
We'll neither curse nor wrangle in spite,
Chide nor fight,
But have done forthright,
And toss him in canvas.

*They toss* Mak *in one of Gill's canvas sheets till they are tired. He disappears groaning into his house. The* Shepherds *pass over to the moor on the other side of the stage.*

*Pri. Pas.* Lord, lo! but I am sore, like to burst, in back and breast.
In faith, I may no more, therefore will I rest.
*Sec. Pas.* Like a sheep of seven score he weighed in my fist.
To sleep anywhere, therefore seemeth now best.
*Ter. Pas.* Now I you pray,
On this green let us lie.
*Pri. Pas.* O'er those thieves yet chafe I.
*Ter. Pas.* Let your anger go by,—
Come do as I say.

*As they are about to lie down, the* Angel *appears*
*Angelus cantat "Gloria in excelsis."*
*Postea dicat:*[6]

*Angelus.* Rise, herdsmen gentle, attend ye, for now is he born
From the fiend that shall rend what Adam had lorn,
That warlock to shend,[7] this night is he born,
God is made your friend now on this morn.
Lo! thus doth he command—
Go to Bethlehem, see
Where he lieth so free,[8]

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[1] See *Everyman*, l. 316, (page 109).
[2] **quaint gaud:** shrewd trick.
[3] **dilly-down:** darling.
[4] **mis-spoken:** bewitched.
[5] **wroken:** revenged.
[6] **Angelus . . . dicat:** The Angel sings the "Gloria in Excelsis." Then let him say:
[7] **warlock to shend:** fiend to spoil, overthrow.
[8] **free:** noble.

In a manger full lowly
'Twixt where twain beasts stand.
[*The* ANGEL *goes*

*Pri. Pas.* This was a fine voice, even as ever I heard.
It is a marvel, by St. Stephen, thus with dread to be stirred.
*Sec. Pas.* 'T was of God's Son from heaven he these tidings averred.
All the wood with a levin,[1] methought at his word
Shone fair.
*Ter. Pas.* Of a Child did he tell,
In Bethlehem, mark ye well.
*Pri. Pas.* That this star yonder doth spell—
Let us seek him there.

*Sec. Pas.* Say, what was his song—how it went, did ye hear?
Three breves to a long—[2]
*Ter. Pas.* Marry, yes, to my ear
There was no crotchet[3] wrong, naught it lacked and full clear!
*Pri. Pas.* To sing it here, us among, as he nicked it,[4] full near,
I know how—
*Sec. Pas.* Let's see how you croon!
Can you bark at the moon?
*Ter. Pas.* Hold your tongues, have done!
Hark after me now!

*They sing.*

*Sec. Pas.* To Bethlehem he bade that we should go.
I am sore adrad[5] that we tarry too slow.
*Ter. Pas.* Be merry, and not sad—our song's of mirth not of woe,
To be forever glad as our meed may we know,
Without noise.
*Pri. Pas.* Hie we thither, then, speedily,
Though we be wet and weary,
To that Child and that Lady!—
We must not lose those joys!

*Sec. Pas.* We find by the prophecy—let be your din!—
David and Isaiah, and more than I mind me therein,
They prophesied by clergy, that in a virgin,
Should be alight and lie, to assuage our sin,
And slake it,
Our nature, from woe,
For it was Isaiah said so,
"*Ecce virgo*
*Concipiet*"[6] a child that is naked.

*Ter. Pas.* Full glad may we be and await that day
That lovesome one to see, that all mights doth sway.
Lord, well it were with me, now and for aye,
Might I kneel on my knee some word for to say
To that child
But the angel said
In a crib was he laid,
He was poorly arrayed,
Both gracious and mild.

*Pri. Pas.* Patriarchs that have been and prophets beforne,[7]
They desired to have seen this child that is born.
They are gone full clean,—that have they lorn.[8]
We shall see him, I ween, ere it be morn,
For token.
When I see him and feel,
I shall know full well,
It is true as steel,
What prophets have spoken,

To so poor as we are that he would appear,
First find and declare by his messenger.
*Sec. Pas.* Go we now, let us fare, the place is us near.
*Ter. Pas.* I am ready and eager to be there; let us together with cheer
To that bright one go.
Lord, if thy will it be,
Untaught are we all three,
Some kind of joy grant us, that we
Thy creatures, comfort may know!

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[1] **levin:** lightning.
[2] **three breves to a long:** three short notes to a long one.
[3] **crotchet:** quarter note.
[4] **nicked it:** hit it off.
[5] **adrad:** adread.
[6] . . . **Concipiet:** *Isaiah:* vii, 14.
[7] **beforne:** before.
[8] **lorn:** lost.

*They enter the stable and adore the infant Saviour*

*Pri. Pas.* Hail, thou comely and clean one! Hail, young Child!
Hail, Maker, as I mean, from a maiden so mild!
Thou hast harried, I ween, the warlock[1] so wild,—
The false beguiler with his teen[2] now goes beguiled.
Lo, he merries,
Lo, he laughs, my sweeting!
A happy meeting!
Here's my promised greeting,—
Have a bob of cherries!

*Sec. Pas.* Hail, sovereign Saviour, for thou hast us sought!
Hail, noble nursling and flower, that all things hast wrought!
Hail, thou, full of gracious power, that made all from nought!
Hail, I kneel and I cower! A bird have I brought
To my bairn from far.
Hail, little tiny mop![3]
Of our creed thou art the crop,[4]
I fain would drink in thy cup,
Little day-star!

*Ter. Pas.* Hail, darling dear one, full of Godhead indeed!
I pray thee be near, when I have need.
Hail, sweet is thy cheer! My heart would bleed
To see thee sit here in so poor a weed,[5]
With no pennies.
Hail, put forth thy dall,[6]
I bring thee but a ball,
Keep it, and play with it withal,
And go to the tennis.

*Maria.* The Father of Heaven this night, God omnipotent,
That setteth all things aright, his Son hath he sent.
My name he named and did light on me ere that he went.
I conceived him forthright through his might as he meant,
And now he is born.
May he keep you from woe!
I shall pray him do so.
Tell it, forth as ye go,
And remember this morn.

*Pri. Pas.* Farewell, Lady, so fair to behold
With thy child on thy knee!
*Sec. Pas.* But he lies full cold!
Lord, 't is well with me! Now we go, behold!
*Ter. Pas.* Forsooth, already it seems to be told
Full oft!
*Pri. Pas.* What grace we have found!
*Sec. Pas.* Now are we won safe and sound.
*Ter. Pas.* Come forth, to sing are we bound.
Make it ring then aloft!
[*They depart singing.*

*Explicit pagina Pastorum.*[7]

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[1] warlock: Satan.
[2] teen: hate.
[3] mop: baby; a term of endearment.
[4] crop: head, topmost part.
[5] weed: dress, covering.
[6] dall: fist.
[7] Explicit pagina Pastorum: Here endeth the play of the Shepherds.

# EVERYMAN

(*First printed in English in 1530. Supposed to be from the Dutch ELCKERLIJK, by one* Peter Dorlandus, *published in 1495.*)

CHARACTERS

Everyman
God
Death
Messenger
Fellowship
Cousin
Kindred
Goods
Good-Deeds
Strength
Discretion
Five-Wits
Beauty
Knowledge
Confession
Angel
Doctor

*Here beginneth a treatise how the High Father of Heaven sendeth Death to summon every creature to come and give account of their lives in this world and is in manner of a moral play.*

*Messenger.* I pray you all give your audience,
And hear this matter with reverence,
By figure a moral play—
The *Summoning of Everyman* called it is,
That of our lives and ending shows
How transitory we be all day.
This matter is wondrous precious,
But the intent of it is more gracious,
And sweet to bear away.
The story saith,—Man, in the beginning,
Look well, and take good heed to the ending,
Be you never so gay!
Ye think sin in the beginning full sweet,
Which in the end causeth thy soul to weep,
When the body lieth in clay.
Here shall you see how *Fellowship* and *Jollity*,
Both *Strength*, *Pleasure*, and *Beauty*,
Will fade from thee as flower in May.
For ye shall hear, how our heaven king
Calleth *Everyman* to a general reckoning:
Give audience, and hear what he doth say.
[*The* Messenger *departs*

*God.* I perceive here in my majesty,
How that all creatures be to me unkind,
Living without dread in worldly prosperity:
Of ghostly[1] sight the people be so blind,
Drowned in sin, they know me not for their God;
In worldly riches is all their mind,
They fear not my rightwiseness,[2] the sharp rod;
My law that I shewed, when I for them died,
They forget clean, and shedding of my blood red;
I hanged between two, it cannot be denied;
To get them life I suffered to be dead;
I healed their feet, with thorns hurt was my head:
I could do no more than I did truly,
And now I see the people do clean forsake me.
They use the seven deadly sins damnable;
As pride, covetise,[3] wrath, and lechery,
Now in the world be made commendable;
And thus they leave of angels the heavenly company;
Everyman liveth so after his own pleasure,
And yet of their life they be nothing sure:
I see the more that I them forbear
The worse they be from year to year;

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[1] ghostly: spiritual.
[2] rightwiseness: righteousness.
[3] covetise: covetousness.

All that liveth appaireth[1] fast,
Therefore I will in all the haste
Have a reckoning of Everyman's person
For and[2] I leave the people thus alone
In their life and wicked tempests,
Verily they will become much worse than beasts;
For now one would by envy another up eat;
Charity they all do clean forget.
I hoped well that Everyman
In my glory should make his mansion,
And thereto I had them all elect;
But now I see, like traitors deject,
They thank me not for the pleasure that I to them meant,
Nor yet for their being that I them have lent;
I proffered the people great multitude of mercy,
And few there be that asketh it heartily;
They be so cumbered with worldly riches,
That needs on them I must do justice,
On Everyman living without fear.
Where art thou, *Death*, thou mighty messenger?
*Death.* Almighty God, I am here at your will,
Your commandment to fulfil.
*God.* Go thou to *Everyman*,
And show him in my name
A pilgrimage he must on him take,
Which he in no wise may escape;
And that he bring with him a sure reckoning
Without delay or any tarrying.
*Death.* Lord, I will in the world go run over all,
And cruelly outsearch both great and small;
Every man will I beset that liveth beastly
Out of God's laws, and dreadeth not folly:
He that loveth riches I will strike with my dart,
His sight to blind, and from heaven to depart,[3]
Except that alms be his good friend,
In hell for to dwell, world without end.
Lo, yonder I see *Everyman* walking;
Full little he thinketh on my coming;
His mind is on fleshly lusts and his treasure,
And great pain it shall cause him to endure
Before the Lord Heaven King.
*Everyman*, stand still; whither art thou going
Thus gaily? Hast thou thy Maker forget?
*Everyman.* Why askst thou?
Wouldest thou wete?[4]
*Death.* Yea, sir, I will show you;
In great haste I am sent to thee
From God out of his majesty.
*Every.* What, sent to me?
*Death.* Yea, certainly.
Though thou have forget him here,
He thinketh on thee in the heavenly sphere,
As, or[5] we depart, thou shalt know.
*Every.* What desireth God of me?
*Death.* That shall I show thee;
A reckoning he will needs have
Without any longer respite.
*Every.* To give a reckoning longer leisure I crave;
This blind matter troubleth my wit.
*Death.* On thee thou must take a long journey:
Therefore thy book of count with thee thou bring;
For turn again thou can not by no way,
And look thou be sure of thy reckoning:
For before God thou shalt answer, and show
Thy many bad deeds and good but a few;
How thou hast spent thy life, and in what wise,
Before the chief lord of paradise.
Have ado that we were in that way,[6]
For, wete thou well, thou shalt make none attournay.[7]
*Every.* Full unready I am such reckoning to give.
I know thee not: what messenger art thou?
*Death.* I am *Death*, that no man dreadeth.

---

[1] appaireth: is impaired: grows more wicked.
[2] and: if.
[3] to depart: to keep from attaining.
[4] wete: know.
[5] or: ere.
[6] Have ado . . . way: Bestir yourself that we may be on the way.
[7] attournay: mediator.

For every man I rest[1] and no man spareth;
For it is God's commandment
That all to me should be obedient.
*Every.* O *Death*, thou comest when I had thee least in mind;
In thy power it lieth me to save,
Yet of my good,[2] will I give thee, if ye will be kind;—
Yea, a thousand pound shalt thou have,
And defer this matter till another day.
*Death. Everyman*, it may not be by no way;
I set not by gold, silver, nor riches,
Ne[3] by pope, emperor, king, duke, ne princes.
For and I would receive gifts great,
All the world I might get;
But my custom is clean contrary.
I give thee no respite: come hence, and not tarry.
*Every.* Alas, shall I have no longer respite?
I may say *Death* giveth no warning:
To think on thee, it maketh my heart sick,
For all unready is my book of reckoning.
But twelve year and I might have abiding,
My counting book I would make so clear,
That my reckoning I should not need to fear.
Wherefore, *Death*, I pray thee, for God's mercy,
Spare me till I be provided of remedy.
*Death.* Thee availeth not to cry, weep, and pray:
But haste thee lightly that you were gone the journey,
And prove thy friends if thou can.
For, wete thou well, the tide abideth no man,
And in the world each living creature
For *Adam's* sin must die of nature.
*Every. Death*, if I should this pilgrimage take,
And my reckoning surely make,
Show me, for saint charity,
Should I not come again shortly?
*Death.* No, *Everyman;* and thou be once there,
Thou mayst never more come here,
Trust me verily.
*Every.* O gracious God, in the high seat celestial,
Have mercy on me in this most need;
Shall I have no company from this vale terrestrial
Of mine acquaintance that way me to lead?
*Death.* Yea, if any be so hardy,
That would go with thee and bear thee company.
Hie thee that you were gone to God's magnificence,
Thy reckoning, to give before his presence.
What, weenest[4] thou thy life is given thee,
And thy worldly goods also?
*Every.* I had wend[5] so, verily.
*Death.* Nay, nay; it was but lent thee;
For as soon as thou art go,
Another awhile shall have it, and then go therefro
Even as thou hast done.
Everyman, thou art mad; thou hast thy wits five,
And here on earth will not amend thy life,
For suddenly I do come.
*Every.* O wretched caitiff,[6] whither shall I flee,
That I might scape this endless sorrow!
Now, gentle *Death*, spare me till to-morrow,
That I may amend me
With good advisement.
*Death.* Nay, thereto I will not consent,
Nor no man will I respite,
But to the heart suddenly I shall smite
Without any advisement.
And now out of thy sight I will me hie;
See thou make thee ready shortly,
For thou mayst say this is the day
That no man living may scape away.
*Every.* Alas, I may well weep with sighs deep;
Now have I no manner of company

---

[1] rest: arrest.

[2] good: goods, wealth.

[3] ne: nor.

[4] weenest: thinkest.

[5] wend: thought.

[6] caitiff: captive.

To help me in my journey, and me to keep;
And also my writing[1] is full unready.
How shall I do now for to excuse me?
I would to God I had never be gete![2]
To my soul a full great profit it had be;
For now I fear pains huge and great.
The time passeth; Lord, help that all wrought;
For though I mourn it availeth nought.
The day passeth, and is almost a-go;
I wot not well what for to do.
To whom were I best my complaint to make?
What, and I to *Fellowship* thereof spake,
And showed him of this sudden chance?
For in him is all mine affiance;[3]
We have in the world so many a day
Be[4] on good friends in sport and play.
I see him yonder, certainly;
I trust that he will bear me company;
Therefore to him will I speak to ease my sorrow.
Well met, good *Fellowship*, and good morrow!
*Fellowship speaketh. Everyman*, good morrow by this day.
Sir, why lookest thou so piteously?
If any thing be amiss, I pray thee, me say,
That I may help to remedy.
*Every.* Yea, good *Fellowship*, yea,
I am in great jeopardy.
*Fell.* My true friend, show to me your mind;
I will not forsake thee, unto my life's end,
In the way of good company.
*Every.* That was well spoken, and lovingly.
*Fell.* Sir, I must needs know your heaviness;
I have pity to see you in any distress;
If any have you wronged ye shall revenged be,
Though I on the ground be slain for thee,—
Though that I know before that I should die.
*Every.* Verily, *Fellowship*, gramercy.
*Fell.* Tush! by thy thanks I set not a straw.
Show me your grief, and say no more.
*Every.* If I my heart should to you break,
And then you to turn your mind from me,
And would not me comfort, when you hear me speak,
Then should I ten times sorrier be.
*Fell.* Sir, I say as I will do in deed.
*Every.* Then be you a good friend at need:
I have found you true here before.
*Fell.* And so ye shall evermore;
For, in faith, and thou go to Hell,
I will not forsake thee by the way!
*Every.* Ye speak like a good friend; I believe you well;
I shall deserve it, and I may.
*Fell.* I speak of no deserving, by this day.
For he that will say and nothing do
Is not worthy with good company to go;
Therefore show me the grief of your mind,
As to your friend most loving and kind.
*Every.* I shall show you how it is;
Commanded I am to go a journey,
A long way, hard and dangerous,
And give a strait count without delay
Before the high judge Adonai.[5]
Wherefore I pray you, bear me company,
As ye have promised, in this journey.
*Fell.* That is matter indeed! Promise is duty,
But, and I should take such a voyage on me,
I know it well, it should be to my pain:
Also it make me afeard, certain.
But let us take counsel here as well as we can,
For your words would fear[6] a strong man.
*Every.* Why, ye said, If I had need,
Ye would me never forsake, quick nor dead,
Though it were to hell truly.
*Fell.* So I said, certainly,
But such pleasures be set aside, thee sooth to say:

---

[1] writing: account.
[2] be gete: been gotten, been born.
[3] affiance: trust.
[4] Be: been.
[5] Adonai: God.
[6] fear: frighten

And also, if we took such a journey,
When should we come again?
*Every.* Nay, never again till the day of doom.
*Fell.* In faith, then will not I come there!
Who hath you these tidings brought?
*Every.* Indeed, *Death* was with me here.
*Fell.* Now, by God that all hath bought,
If *Death* were the messenger,
For no man that is living to-day
I will not go that loath journey—
Not for the father that begat me!
*Every.* Ye promised other wise, pardie.
*Fell.* I wot well I say so truly;
And yet if thou wilt eat, and drink, and make good cheer,
Or haunt to women, the lusty company,
I would not forsake you, while the day is clear,
Trust me verily!
*Every.* Yea, thereto ye would be ready;
To go to mirth, solace, and play,
Your mind will sooner apply
Than to bear me company in my long journey.
*Fell.* Now, in good faith, I will not that way.
But and thou wilt murder, or any man kill,
In that I will help thee with a good will!
*Every.* O that is a simple advice indeed!
Gentle fellow, help me in my necessity;
We have loved long, and now I need,
And now, gentle *Fellowship*, remember me.
*Fell.* Whether ye have loved me or no,
By Saint John, I will not with thee go.
*Every.* Yet I pray thee, take the labour, and do so much for me
To bring me forward, for saint charity,
And comfort me till I come without the town.
*Fell.* Nay, and thou would give me a new gown,
I will not a foot with thee go;
But and you had tarried I would not have left thee so.
And as now, God speed thee in thy journey,
For from thee I will depart as fast as I may.
*Every.* Whither away, *Fellowship?* will you forsake me?
*Fell.* Yea, by my fay,[1] to God I betake[2] thee.
*Every.* Farewell, good *Fellowship;* for this my heart is sore;
Adieu for ever, I shall see thee no more.
*Fell.* In faith, *Everyman*, farewell now at the end;
For you I will remember that parting is mourning.
*Every.* Alack? shall we thus depart[3] indeed?
Our Lady, help, without any more comfort,
Lo, *Fellowship* forsaketh me in my most need:
For help in this world whither shall I resort?
*Fellowship* herebefore with me would merry make;
And now little sorrow for me doth he take.
It is said, in prosperity men friends may find,
Which in adversity be full unkind.
Now whither for succour shall I flee,
Sith that *Fellowship* hath forsaken me?
To my kinsmen I will truly,
Praying them to help me in my necessity;
I believe that they will do so,
For kind[4] will creep where it may not go.[5]
I will go say, for yonder I see them go.
Where be ye now, my friends and kinsmen?
*Kindred.* Here be we now at your commandment.
*Cousin*, I pray you show us your intent
In any wise, and not spare.
*Cousin.* Yea, *Everyman*, and to us declare
If ye be disposed to go any whither,
For wete you well, we will live and die together.

---

[1] fay: faith.
[2] betake: commend.
[3] depart: separate.
[4] kind: kin.
[5] go: walk.

*Kin.* In wealth and woe we will with you hold,
For over his kin a man may be bold.
*Every.* Gramercy, my friends and kinsmen kind.
Now shall I show you the grief of my mind:
I was commanded by a messenger,
That is an high king's chief officer;
He bade me go a pilgrimage to my pain,
And I know well I shall never come again;
Also I must give a reckoning straight,
For I have a great enemy, that hath me in wait,[1]
Which intendeth me for to hinder.
*Kin.* What account is that which ye must render?
That would I know.
*Every.* Of all my works I must show
How I have lived and my days spent;
Also of ill deeds, that I have used
In my time, sith[2] life was me lent;
And of all virtues that I have refused.
Therefore I pray you go thither with me,
To help to make mine account, for saint charity.
*Cou.* What, to go thither? Is that the matter?
Nay, *Everyman*, I had liefer fast bread and water
All this five year and more.
*Every.* Alas, that ever I was bore![3]
For now shall I never be merry
If that you forsake me.
*Kin.* Ah, sir; what, ye be a merry man!
Take good heart to you, and make no moan.
But one thing I warn you, by Saint Anne,
As for me, ye shall go alone.
*Every.* My *Cousin*, will you not with me go?
*Cou.* No, by our Lady; I have the cramp in my toe.
Trust not to me, for, so God me speed,
I will deceive you in your most need.
*Kin.* It availeth not us to tice.[4]
Ye shall have my maid with all my heart;
She loveth to go to feasts, there to be nice,[5]
And to dance, and abroad to start:
I will give her leave to help you in that journey,
If that you and she may agree.
*Every.* Now show me the very effect of your mind.
Will you go with me, or abide behind?
*Kin.* Abide behind? yea, that I will and I may!
Therefore farewell until another day.
*Every.* How should I be merry or glad?
For fair promises men to me make,
But when I have most need, they me forsake.
I am deceived; that maketh me sad.
*Cou.* Cousin *Everyman*, farewell now,
For verily I will not go with you;
Also of mine own an unready reckoning
I have to account; therefore I make tarrying.
Now, God keep thee, for now I go.
*Every.* Ah, *Jesus*, is all come hereto?
Lo, fair words maketh fools feign;
They promise and nothing will do certain.
My kinsmen promised me faithfully
For to abide with me steadfastly,
And now fast away do they flee:
Even so *Fellowship* promised me.
What friend were best me of to provide?
I lose my time here longer to abide.
Yet in my mind a thing there is;—
All my life I have loved riches;
If that my good now help me might,
He would make my heart full light.
I will speak to him in this distress.—
Where art thou, my *Goods* and riches?
*Goods.* Who calleth me? *Everyman?* what haste thou hast!
I lie here in corners, trussed and piled so high,
And in chests I am locked so fast,
Also sacked in bags, thou mayst see with thine eye,
I cannot stir; in packs low I lie.
What would ye have, lightly me say.
*Every.* Come hither, *Good*, in all the haste thou may,
For of counsel I must desire thee.

---

[1] hath . . . wait: lieth in wait for me.
[2] sith: since.
[3] bore: born.
[4] tice: entice.
[5] nice: gay.

*Goods.* Sir, and ye in the world have trouble or adversity,
That can I help you to remedy shortly.
*Every.* It is another disease that grieveth me;
In this world it is not, I tell thee so.
I am sent for another way to go,
To give a straight account general
Before the highest Jupiter of all;
And all my life I have had joy and pleasure in thee.
Therefore I pray thee go with me,
For, peradventure, thou mayst before God Almighty
My reckoning help to clean and purify;
For it is said ever among,
That money maketh all right that is wrong.
*Goods.* Nay, *Everyman,* I sing another song,
I follow no man in such voyages;
For and I went with thee
Thou shouldst fare much the worse for me;
For because on me thou did set thy mind,
Thy reckoning I have made blotted and blind,
That thine account thou cannot make truly;
And that hast thou for the love of me.
*Every.* That would grieve me full sore,
When I should come to that fearful answer.
Up, let us go thither together.
*Goods.* Nay, not so, I am too brittle, I may not endure;
I will follow no man one foot, be ye sure.
*Every.* Alas, I have thee loved, and had great pleasure
All my life-days on good and treasure.
*Goods.* That is to thy damnation without lesing[1],
For my love is contrary to the love everlasting.
But if thou had me loved moderately during,
As, to the poor give part of me,
Then shouldst thou not in this dolour be,
Nor in this great sorrow and care.
*Every.* Lo, now was I deceived or I was ware,
And all I may wyte[2] my spending of time.
*Goods.* What, weenest[3] thou that I am thine?
*Every.* I had wend[4] so.
*Goods.* Nay, *Everyman,* I say no;
As for a while I was lent thee,
A season thou hast had me in prosperity;
My condition is man's soul to kill;
If I save one, a thousand I do spill;
Weenest thou that I will follow thee?
Nay, from this world, not verily.
*Every.* I had wend otherwise.
*Goods.* Therefore to thy soul *Good* is a thief;
For when thou art dead, this is my guise
Another to deceive in the same wise
As I have done thee, and all to his soul's reprief.[5]
*Every.* O false *Good,* cursed thou be!
Thou traitor to God, that hast deceived me,
And caught me in thy snare.
*Goods.* Marry, thou brought thyself in care,
Whereof I am glad,
I must needs laugh, I cannot be sad.
*Every.* Ah, *Good,* thou hast had long my heartly[6] love;
I gave thee that which should be the Lord's above.
But wilt thou not go with me in deed?
I pray thee truth to say.
*Goods.* No, so God me speed,
Therefore farewell, and have good day.
*Every.* O, to whom shall I make my moan
For to go with me in that heavy journey?
First *Fellowship* said he would with me gone[7];
His words were very pleasant and gay,
But afterward he left me alone.
Then spake I to my kinsmen all in despair,
And also they gave me words fair,
They lacked no fair speaking,
But all forsake me in the ending.

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[1] lesing: lying.

[2] wyte: blame.

[3] weenest: thinkest.

[4] wend: thought.

[5] reprief: reproof.

[6] heartly: hearty; heartfelt.

[7] gone: have gone.

Then went I to my *Goods* that I loved best,
In hope to have comfort, but there had I least;
For my *Goods* sharply did me tell
That he bringeth many into hell.
Then of myself I was ashamed,
And so I am worthy to be blamed;
Thus may I well myself hate.
Of whom shall I now counsel take?
I think that I shall never speed
Till that I go to my *Good-Deed*,
But alas, she is so weak,
That she can neither go nor speak;
Yet will I venture on her now.—
My *Good-Deeds*, where be you?
*Good-Deeds.* Here I lie cold in the ground;
Thy sins hath me sore bound,
That I cannot stir.
*Every.* O, *Good-Deeds*, I stand in fear;
I must you pray of counsel,
For help now should come right well.
*Good-Deeds.* *Everyman*, I have understanding
That ye be summoned account to make
Before *Messias*, of Jerusalem King;
And you do by me[1] that journey with you will I take.
*Every.* Therefore I come to you, my moan to make;
I pray you, that ye will go with me.
*Good-Deeds.* I would full fain, but I cannot stand verily.
*Every.* Why, is there anything on you fall?
*Good-Deeds.* Yea, sir, I may thank you of all;
If ye had perfectly cheered me,
Your book of account now full ready had be.
Look, the books of your works and deeds eke;
Oh, see how they lie under the feet,
To your soul's heaviness.
*Every.* Our Lord *Jesus*, help me!
For one letter here I can not see.
*Good-Deeds.* There is a blind reckoning in time of distress!
*Every.* *Good-Deeds*, I pray you, help me in this need,
Or else I am for ever damned indeed;
Therefore help me to make reckoning
Before the redeemer of all thing,
That king is, and was, and ever shall.
*Good-Deeds.* *Everyman*, I am sorry of your fall,
And fain would I help you, and I were able.
*Every.* *Good-Deeds*, your counsel I pray you give me.
*Good-Deeds.* That shall I do verily;
Though that on my feet I may not go,
I have a sister, that shall with you also,
Called *Knowledge*, which shall with you abide,
To help you to make that dreadful reckoning.
*Knowledge.* *Everyman*, I will go with thee, and be thy guide,
In thy most need to go by thy side.
*Every.* In good condition I am now in every thing,
And am wholly content with this good thing;
Thanked be God my Creator.
*Good-Deeds.* And when he hath brought thee there,
Where thou shalt heal thee of thy smart,
Then go you with your reckoning and your *Good-Deeds* together
For to make you joyful at heart
Before the blessed Trinity.
*Every.* My *Good-Deeds*, gramercy;
I am well content, certainly,
With your words sweet.
*Knowl.* Now go we together lovingly,
To *Confession*, that cleansing river.
*Every.* For joy I weep; I would we were there;
But, I pray you, give me cognition
Where dwelleth that holy man, *Confession*.
*Knowl.* In the house of salvation:
We shall find him in that place,
That shall us comfort by God's grace.
Lo, this is *Confession;* kneel down and ask mercy,
For he is in good conceit[2] with God almighty.
*Every.* O glorious fountain that all uncleanness doth clarify,
Wash from me the spots of vices unclean,
That on me no sin may be seen;
I come with *Knowledge* for my redemption,

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[1] And you . . . me. If you go by me.

[2] conceit: favor.

Repent with hearty and full contrition;
For I am commanded a pilgrimage to take,
And great accounts before God to make.
Now, I pray you, *Shrift*, mother of salvation,
Help my good deeds for my piteous exclamation.
*Confession.* I know your sorrow well, *Everyman;*
Because with *Knowledge* ye come to me,
I will you comfort as well as I can,
And a precious jewel I will give thee,
Called penance, wise voider of adversity;
Therewith shall your body chastised be,
With abstinence and perseverance in God's service:
Here shall you receive that scourge of me,
Which is penance strong, that ye must endure,
To remember thy Saviour was scourged for thee
With sharp scourges, and suffered it patiently;
So must thou, or thou scape that painful pilgrimage;
*Knowledge*, keep him in this voyage,
And by that time *Good-Deeds* will be with thee.
But in any wise, be sure of mercy,
For your time draweth fast, and ye will saved be;
Ask God mercy, and He will grant truly,
When with the scourge of penance man doth him bind,
The oil of forgiveness then shall he find.
*Every.* Thanked be God for his gracious work!
For now I will my penance begin;
This hath rejoiced and lighted my heart,
Though the knots be painful and hard within.
*Knowl.* *Everyman*, look your penance that ye fulfil,
What pain that ever it to you be,
And *Knowledge* shall give you counsel at will,
How your accounts ye shall make clearly.
*Every.* O eternal God, O heavenly figure,
O way of rightwiseness,[1] O goodly vision,
Which descended down in a virgin pure
Because he would *Everyman* redeem,
Which Adam forfeited by his disobedience:
O blessed Godhead, elect and high-divine,
Forgive my grievous offence;
Here I cry thee mercy in this presence.
O ghostly treasure, O ransomer and redeemer
Of all the world, hope and conductor,
Mirror of joy, and founder of mercy,
Which illumineth heaven and earth thereby,
Hear my clamorous complaint, though it late be;
Receive my prayers; unworthy in this heavy life,
Though I be, a sinner most abominable,
Yet let my name be written in Moses' table;
O *Mary*, pray to the Maker of all thing,
Me for to help at my ending,
And save me from the power of my enemy,
For *Death* assaileth me strongly;
And, Lady, that I may by means of thy prayer
Of your Son's glory to be partaker,
By the means of his passion I it crave,
I beseech you, help my soul to save.—
*Knowledge*, give me the scourge of penance;
My flesh therewith shall give a quittance:
I will now begin, if God give me grace.
*Knowl.* *Everyman*, God give you time and space:
Thus I bequeath you in the hands of our Saviour,
Thus may you make your reckoning sure.
*Every.* In the name of the Holy Trinity,
My body sore punished shall be:
Take this body for the sin of the flesh;
Also thou delightest to go gay and fresh,
And in the way of damnation thou did me bring:
Therefore suffer now strokes and punishing.
Now of penance I will wade the water clear,
To save me from purgatory, that sharp fire.

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[1] rightwiseness: righteousness.

*Good-Deeds.* I thank God, now I can walk and go;
And am delivered of my sickness and woe.
Therefore with *Everyman* I will go, and not spare;
His good works I will help him to declare.
*Knowl.* Now, *Everyman*, be merry and glad;
Your *Good-Deeds* cometh now; ye may not be sad;
Now is your *Good-Deeds* whole and sound,
Going upright upon the ground.
*Every.* My heart is light, and shall be evermore;
Now will I smite faster than I did before.
*Good-Deeds.* *Everyman*, pilgrim, my special friend,
Blessed be thou without end;
For thee is prepared the eternal glory.
Ye have me made whole and sound,
Therefore I will bide by thee in every stound.[1]
*Every.* Welcome, my *Good-Deeds;* now I hear thy voice,
I weep for very sweetness of love.
*Knowl.* Be no more sad, but ever rejoice,
God seeth thy living in his throne above;
Put on this garment to thy behove,[2]
Which is wet with your tears,
Or else before God you may it miss,
When you to your journey's end come shall.
*Every.* Gentle *Knowledge*, what do you it call?
*Knowl.* It is a garment of sorrow:
From pain it will you borrow,[3]
Contrition it is,
That getteth forgiveness;
It pleaseth God passing well.
*Good-Deeds.* *Everyman*, will you wear it for your heal?
*Every.* Now blessed be *Jesu, Mary's Son!*
For now have I on true contrition.
And let us go now without tarrying;
*Good-Deeds*, have we clear our reckoning?
*Good-Deeds.* Yea, indeed I have it here.
*Every.* Then I trust we need not fear;
Now, friends, let us not part in twain.
*Knowl.* Nay, Everyman, that will we not, certain.
*Good-Deeds.* Yet must thou lead with thee
Three persons of great might.
*Every.* Who should they be?
*Good-Deeds.* *Discretion* and *Strength* they hight,[4]
And thy *Beauty* may not abide behind.
*Knowl.* Also ye must call to mind
Your *Five-Wits* as for your counsellors.
*Good-Deeds.* You must have them ready at all hours.
*Every.* How shall I get them hither?
*Knowl.* You must call them all together,
And they will hear you incontinent.[5]
*Every.* My friends, come hither and be present
*Discretion*, *Strength*, my *Five-Wits*, and *Beauty*.
*Beauty.* Here at your will we be all ready.
What will ye that we should do?
*Good-Deeds.* That ye would with *Everyman* go,
And help him in his pilgrimage,
Advise you, will ye with him or not in that voyage?
*Strength.* We will bring him all thither,
To his help and comfort, ye may believe me.
*Discretion.* So will we go with him all together.
*Every.* Almighty God, loved thou be,
I give thee laud that I have hither brought
*Strength*, *Discretion*, *Beauty*, and *Five-Wits;* lack I nought;
And my *Good-Deeds*, with *Knowledge* clear,
All be in my company at my will here;
I desire no more to my business.
*Strength.* And I, *Strength*, will by you stand in distress,
Though thou would in battle fight on the ground.

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[1] stound: season.
[2] behove: profit.
[3] borrow: save.
[4] hight: are called.
[5] incontinent: without delay.

*Five-Wits.* And though it were through the world round,
We will not depart for sweet nor sour.
*Beauty.* No more will I unto death's hour,
Whatsoever thereof befall.
*Disc.* *Everyman,* advise you first of all;
Go with a good advisement and deliberation;
We all give you virtuous monition
That all shall be well.
*Every.* My friends, hearken what I will tell:
I pray God reward you in his heavenly sphere.
Now hearken, all that be here,
For I will make my testament
Here before you all present.
In alms half my good I will give with my hands twain
In the way of charity, with good intent,
And the other half still shall remain
In quiet to be returned there[1] it ougnt to be.
This I do in despite of the fiend of hell
To go quite out of his peril
Ever after and this day.
*Knowl.* *Everyman,* hearken what I say;
Go to priesthood, I you advise,
And receive of him in any wise
The holy sacrament and ointment together;
Then shortly see ye turn again hither;
We will all abide you here.
*Five-Wits.* Yea, *Everyman,* hie you that ye ready were,[2]
There is no emperor, king, duke, ne baron,
That of God hath commission,
As hath the least priest in the world being;
For of the blessed sacraments pure and benign,
He beareth the keys and thereof hath the cure
For man's redemption, it is ever sure;
Which God for our soul's medicine
Gave us out of his heart with great pine;[3]
Here in this transitory life, for thee and me
The blessed sacraments seven there be,
Baptism, confirmation, with priesthood good,
And the sacrament of God's precious flesh and blood,
Marriage, the holy extreme unction, and penance;
These seven be good to have in remembrance,
Gracious sacraments of high divinity.
*Every.* Fain would I receive that holy body
And meekly to my ghostly father I will go.
*Five-Wits.* *Everyman,* that is the best that ye can do:
God will you to salvation bring,
For priesthood exceedeth all other thing;
To us Holy Scripture they do teach,
And converteth man from sin heaven to reach;
God hath to them more power given,
Than to any angel that is in heaven;
With five words he may consecrate
God's body in flesh and blood to make,
And handleth his maker between his hands;
The priest bindeth and unbindeth all bands,
Both in earth and in heaven;—
Thou ministers all the sacraments seven;
Though we kissed thy feet thou were worthy;
Thou art surgeon that cureth sin deadly:
No remedy we find under God
But all only priesthood.
*Every.* God gave priests that dignity,
And setteth them in his stead among us to be;
Thus be they above angels in degree.
*Knowl.* If priests be good it is so surely;
But when Jesus hanged on the cross with great smart
There he gave, out of his blessed heart,
The same sacrament in great torment:
He sold them not to us, that Lord Omnipotent.
Therefore Saint Peter the apostle doth say
That Jesu's curse hath all they

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[1] there: where.
[2] that . . . were: that you may be ready.
[3] pine: pain.

Which God their Saviour do buy or sell,
Or they for any money do take or tell.
Sinful priests giveth the sinners example bad;

* * *

These be with sin made blind.
*Five-Wits.* I trust to God no such may we find;
Therefore let us priesthood honour,
And follow their doctrine for our souls' succour;
We be their sheep, and they shepherds be
By whom we all be kept in surety.
Peace, for yonder I see *Everyman* come,
Which hath made true satisfaction.
*Good-Deeds.* Methinketh it is he indeed.
*Every.* Now *Jesu* be our alder speed.[1]
I have received the sacrament for my redemption,
And then mine extreme unction:
Blessed be all they that counselled me to take it!
And now, friends, let us go without longer respite;
I thank God that ye have tarried so long.
Now set each of you on this rod[2] your hand,
And shortly follow me:
I go before, there I would be;
God be our guide.
*Strength.* *Everyman*, we will not from you go,
Till ye have gone this voyage long.
*Disc.* I, *Discretion*, will bide by you also.
*Knowl.* And though this pilgrimage be never so strong,[3]
I will never part you fro:
*Everyman*, I will be as sure by thee
As ever I did by Judas Maccabee.[4]
*Every.* Alas, I am so faint I may not stand,
My limbs under me do fold;
Friends, let us not turn again to this land,
Not for all the world's gold,
For into this cave must I creep
And turn to the earth and there to sleep.
*Beauty.* What, into this grave? alas!
*Every.* Yea, there shall you consume more and less.[5]
*Beauty.* And what, should I smother here?
*Every.* Yea, by my faith, and never more appear.
In this world live no more we shall,
But in heaven before the highest Lord of all.
*Beauty.* I cross out all this; adieu by Saint John;
I take my tap in my lap[6] and am gone.
*Every.* What, *Beauty*, whither will ye?
*Beauty.* Peace, I am deaf; I look not behind me,
Not and thou would give me all the gold in thy chest.
*Every.* Alas, whereto may I trust?
*Beauty* goeth fast away hie;
She promised with me to live and die.
*Strength.* *Everyman*, I will thee also forsake and deny;
Thy game liketh me not at all.
*Every.* Why, then ye will forsake me all.
Sweet *Strength*, tarry a little space.
*Strength.* Nay, sir, by the rood of grace
I will hie me from thee fast,
Though thou weep till thy heart brast.[7]
*Every.* Ye would ever bide by me, ye said.
*Strength.* Yea, I have you far enough conveyed;
Ye be old enough, I understand,
Your pilgrimage to take on hand;
I repent me that I hither came.
*Every.* *Strength*, you to displease I am to blame;
Will you break promise that is debt?[8]
*Strength.* In faith, I care not;
Thou art but a fool to complain,
You spend your speech and waste your brain;
Go thrust thee into the ground.

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[1] be . . . speed: help of all of us.

[2] rod: rood, cross.

[3] strong: difficult.

[4] Judas Maccabee: a brilliant Jewish patriot of the second century B.C., who led his people in a successful revolt against the religious persecutions of the king of Syria. [See *First Maccabees* in the *Apocrypha*.]

[5] more and less: of both high and low estate.

[6] tap . . . lap: a tap is a bunch of flax or tow on the distaff used in spinning; a proverbial expression for "to take French leave."

[7] brast: break.

[8] debt: owed.

*Every.* I had wend[1] surer I should you have found.
He that trusteth in his *Strength*
She him deceiveth at the length.
Both *Strength* and *Beauty* forsaketh me,
Yet they promised me fair and lovingly.
*Disc.* *Everyman*, I will after *Strength* be gone,
As for me I will leave you alone.
*Every.* Why, *Discretion*, will ye forsake me?
*Disc.* Yea, in faith, I will go from thee,
For when *Strength* goeth before
I follow after evermore.
*Every.* Yet, I pray thee, for the love of the Trinity,
Look in my grave once piteously.
*Disc.* Nay, so nigh will I not come.
Farewell, every one!
*Every.* O all thing faileth, save God alone;
*Beauty*, *Strength*, and *Discretion;*
For when *Death* bloweth his blast,
They all run from me full fast.
*Five-Wits.* *Everyman*, my leave now of thee I take;
I will follow the other, for here I thee forsake.
*Every.* Alas! then may I wail and weep,
For I took you for my best friend.
*Five-Wits.* I will no longer thee keep;
Now farewell, and there an end.
*Every.* O *Jesu*, help, all hath forsaken me!
*Good-Deeds.* Nay, *Everyman*, I will bide with thee,
I will not forsake thee indeed;
Thou shalt find me a good friend at need.
*Every.* Gramercy, *Good-Deeds;* now may I true friends see;
They have forsaken me every one;
I loved them better than my *Good-Deeds* alone.
*Knowledge*, will ye forsake me also?
*Knowl.* Yea, *Everyman*, when ye to death do go:
But not yet for no manner of danger.
*Every.* Gramercy, *Knowledge*, with all my heart.
*Knowl.* Nay, yet I will not from hence depart,
Till I see where ye shall be come.
*Every.* Methinketh, alas, that I must be gone,
To make my reckoning and my debts pay,
For I see my time is nigh spent away.
Take example, all ye that this do hear or see,
How they that I loved best do forsake me,
Except my *Good-Deeds* that bideth truly.
*Good-Deeds.* All earthly things is but vanity:
*Beauty*, *Strength*, and *Discretion*, do man forsake,
Foolish friends and kinsmen, that fair spake,
All fleeth save *Good-Deeds*, and that am I.
*Every.* Have mercy on me, God most mighty;
And stand by me, thou Mother and Maid, holy *Mary*.
*Good-Deeds.* Fear not, I will speak for thee.
*Every.* Here I cry God mercy.
*Good-Deeds.* Short[2] our end, and minish[3] our pain;
Let us go and never come again.
*Every.* Into thy hands, Lord, my soul I commend;
Receive it, Lord, that it be not lost;
As thou me boughtest, so me defend,
And save he, from the fiend's boast,
That I may appear with that blessed host
That shall be saved at the day of doom.
*In manus tuas*—of mights the most
For ever—*commendo spiritum meum.*[4]
*Knowl.* Now hath he suffered that we all shall endure;
The *Good-Deeds* shall make all sure.
Now hath he made ending;
Methinketh that I hear angels sing
And make great joy and melody,
Where *Everyman's* soul received shall be.
*Angel.* Come, excellent elect spouse to Jesu:

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[1] wend: thought.

[2] Short: shorten.

[3] minish: lessen.

[4] In manus . . . meum: Into thy hands—I commend my spirit.

Hereabove thou shalt go
Because of thy singular virtue:
Now the soul is taken the body fro;
Thy reckoning is crystal-clear.
Now shalt thou into the heavenly sphere,
Unto the which all ye shall come
That liveth well before the day of doom.

*The* Doctor *enters*

*Doctor.*[1] This moral men may have in mind;
Ye hearers, take it of worth, old and young,
And forsake pride, for he deceiveth you in the end,
And remember *Beauty*, *Five-Wits*, *Strength*, and *Discretion*,
They all at the last do *Everyman* forsake,
Save his *Good-Deeds*, there doth he take.
But beware, and they be small
Before God, he hath no help at all.
None excuse may be there for *Everyman:*
Alas, how shall he do then?
For after death amends may no man make,
For then mercy and pity do him forsake.
If his reckoning be not clear when he do come,
God will say—*ite maledicti in ignem æternum.*[2]
And he that hath his account whole and sound,
High in heaven he shall be crowned;
Unto which place God bring us all thither
That we may live body and soul together.
Thereto help the Trinity,
Amen, say ye, for saint Charity.

Thus Endeth This Morall Play of Everyman

## READING LIST

### OLD PLAYS

The "Quem Quaeritis" from the *Regularis Concordia Monachorum* of the Tenth Century.
(See: *Early Plays*, edited by Clarence G. Child
*English Miracle Plays, Moralities, and Interludes*, A. W. Pollard
*Cambridge History of English Literature*, Vol. V, Chapter III.)
*The Deluge* (Noah's Ark) from the Chester Cycle
*The Three Kings* from the Chester Cycle
*The Play of the Three Maries* (Cornish Mystery Play)
*The Sacrifice of Isaac* from the Brome Ms.
*The Resurrection* from the York Corpus Christi Plays
*The Judgment Day* from the York Corpus Christi Plays
*Mundus et Infans*
*Hycke-Scorner*
*Wit and Science*, John Redford
*Magnyfycence*, John Skelton
*The Four P's*, John Heywood
*King John*, John Bale
*The Star of Bethlehem: A Miracle Play of the Nativity Reconstructed from the Towneley and other Old English Cycles, and Supplemented and Adapted to Modern Conditions*, Charles Mills Gayley

### MODERN MORALITIES

*Bethlehem: A Nativity Play*, Laurence Housman
*Nazareth: A Morality in One Act*, Laurence Housman
*The Lord of the Harvest: A Morality in One Act*, Laurence Housman
*The Wolf of Gubbio:* (Especially the last act), Josephine Preston Peabody Marks
*The Terrible Meek*, Charles Rann Kennedy
*The Servant in the House*, Charles Rann Kennedy
*The Chastening*, Charles Rann Kennedy
*The Passing of the Third Floor Back*, Jerome K. Jerome
*The Fool*, Channing Pollock
*Outward Bound*, Sutton Vane
*Everywoman*, Walter Browne

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[1] **Doctor:** scholar, learned man.

[2] **ite . . . æternum:** Go, ye accursed, into everlasting fire.

*The Miracle*, Staged by Max Reinhardt
*Peer Gynt*, Henrik Ibsen
*The Hour Glass*, William Butler Yeats
*The Traveling Man*, Lady Gregory
*The Bluebird*, Maurice Maeterlinck
*The Blind*, Maurice Maeterlinck

## TOPICS

The Cathedral Setting of the Liturgical Mysteries
The Presentation of a Miracle Play in England
The Presentation of a Mystery Play in France
The Property List of a Mediaeval Religious Play
The Oberammergau Passion Play
The St. George or Mummers' Plays of Old England
Dramatic Elements in Old English Village Festivals and Dances
The Dramatic Elements in Old English Ballads
The Influence of the Tudor Court on English Drama
School Boy Actors in Tudor England (For example: The Children of the Chapel Royal, of St. George's Chapel, of Westminster, of the Merchant Taylors' School, of Eton)
Modern Settings for Old Miracle and Morality Plays
The Staging of *The Miracle* by Max Reinhardt at the Century Theatre in New York.

# THE RENAISSANCE—THE CONTINENT

## THE UNITIES

*The Renaissance* which swept over Europe in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries finally transformed the mediaeval forms into the modern drama of the great European countries.

In the enthusiastic Revival of Learning which brought about the Renaissance movement the almost forgotten world of classic literature, known through the Dark Ages to only a few scholars, soon became accessible to all. The plays of the Greek and Roman dramatists were read in the original languages and in translations. They were, however, studied, not acted; and the model of the academic drama became not the great Greek originals, but the stilted and exaggerated imitations of the more easily read Latin plays of Seneca. All the faults of Seneca's plays were considered excellences to be closely copied. From the careful study of them and of the classical criticism of poetry the Italian critics of the Renaissance deduced certain rigid rules which were held obligatory on all serious writers of plays. The most stringent of these rules was that of the *Three Unities.*[1]

Italian scholars were not content to be mere translators of Aristotle's *Poetics* and Horace's *Art of Poetry;* they added their own commentaries and deductions. In the sixteenth century one of the most famous of these critics was **Scaliger** (Julius Caesar Scaliger, 1484–1558), a learned Italian, who through his long residence in France exerted marked influence over French students of the drama. It was another Italian, **Lodovico Castelvetro** (1505–1571), who first set forth the definite theory of the Three Unities in his translation of Aristotle: *The time of the representation and that of the action represented must be constant, being not merely restricted to one city or house, but indeed to that one place alone which could be visible to one person.* And again: *The time of the action ought not to exceed the limit of twelve hours.*[2]

In England and in Spain, although these rules were known and even upheld by some—in the former country notably by Shakespeare's contemporary, Ben Jonson;—yet, practical playwrights discarded such narrow restrictions, and a freer drama arose.

On the other hand, in France, in the seventeenth century the critics followed in the footsteps of the Italians. One of the most authoritative in his own day was **Jean Chapelain** (1595–1674), who became the spokesman of the French Academy in its attack on Corneille in the famous literary battle over *The Cid.* Chapelain proclaimed the law of the *Three Dramatic Unities* as fundamental to any tragedy; and so established Neo-Classicism in French drama.

It remained for the satiric poet and critic **Boileau** (Nicholas Boileau-Despréaux, 1631–1711) to give permanent expression to the dramatic precepts of the classicists in his didactic poem the *Art of Poetry* (*L'Art Poetique*), which was modeled on Horace's *Art of Poetry* (*Ars Poetica*). The third canto of Boileau's poem lays down the classical laws for tragedy and comedy. This literary law-giver insisted arbitrarily that the Three Unities must not be violated; that scenes of horror or bloodshed must not be presented upon the stage; that humor must not be introduced into a serious play; that nobody but kings, queens, or eminent personages should be the chief characters of elevated drama; that there should be no more nor no less than five acts; that tragedy should be written only in polished verse,—the

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[1] See page 8 supra.

[2] Quoted from *European Theories of the Drama*, edited by Barrett H. Clark.

French alexandrine line riming in couplets. For two centuries and a half all tragedies in France, whether literary or popular or both, were composed in strict conformity to these narrow and artificial so-called "classic" rules.

Boileau's influence was extended to England at the end of the seventeenth century and definitely shaped the poetry and drama of his English contemporaries, especially Dryden and Pope. The former in *An Essay of Dramatick Poesie* (1688) discussed at length the Three Unities, and expressed his full concurrence therein. Nevertheless, the influence of French classicism did not really cramp English dramatic genius until the eighteenth century.

Thus while in the sixteenth century England and Spain threw off the academic restrictions of Neo-Classicism and developed a national drama that was freely romantic, France accepted the rules formulated by the classic scholars under the Revival of Learning and made them her own.

Since the battle of The Unities held the European literary stage for nearly three centuries, it has been here summarized briefly. It is only during a special era when drama falls into the hands of an artificial social clique, as in the French court of the Grand Monarch, that such arbitrary regulations of taste can reign supreme. Fortunately practical playwrights refuse to be tied down by exacting limitations. They write not by rule of thumb, but from sheer exuberance of creation, combined with a certain shrewd business sense of what their public will enjoy; for their plays are not conceived as literary classics, but as actable plays that will draw the crowds. A mere scholar satisfies only the first of these conditions, that his work must be literary, and the result is "closet drama"; a get-rich-quick producer satisfies only the second, that his plays must "give the people what they want," and the result is the commercialized theatre; but a genius fulfills both conditions, and the result is great drama.[1]

## ITALY

Since in Italy the literary rules for the composition of plays were studiously followed, the history of Italian drama is less interesting than that of England, France, or Spain. Both comedy and tragedy were modeled on translations from the Greek and Latin, but were poetic rather than dramatic, and were appreciated only by the learned. In contrast to this academic drama there developed out of the folk drama derived from the *mimes* of the late Roman Empire the popular *Commedia dell' Arte* and the *Comedy of Masks*. These were pantomimes with impromptu dialogue composed by the actors from a bare outline of the plot, called the *scenario*, and performed by certain stereotyped characters. These actors belonged to a guild (*arte*) which handed down from father to son traditional business and buffoonery. There was little variation in the plots; the success of the play depended upon the cleverness of the dialogue and the skill of the acting. So famous did some of the companies become at the end of the seventeenth century that they made tours to London and Paris.

Another type that developed in Italy during the Renaissance was the literary *pastoral comedy* which was imitated in Spain, France, and England. The most influential was the *Aminta* of **Torquato Tasso** (1544–1595). These comedies were romantic love stories of idealized shepherd life, full of allegory and classical allusions. From these pastoral comedies sprang later in the seventeenth century the Italian *opera*.

But, on the whole, Italy produced only formal literary plays which had little effect upon the progress of the history of the drama. Her most important contribution, perhaps, was the use of scenery painted in perspective on flat canvas for the elaborate settings of the opera. This new fashion was adopted into England in the picture-frame stages of the Restoration theatres.

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[1] For a fuller examination of the sources of the controversy over the Unities, the high school student is referred to Barrett H. Clark's "European Theories of the Drama." (Especially the sections dealing with Dramatic Criticism of the Italian Renaissance and French Dramatic Criticism of the Seventeenth Century.)

## SPAIN

The religious fervor and stately chivalry of the Spanish people kept them longer apart from the new spirit of the Renaissance than their neighbors in France. In the great age of the Spanish drama, the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, the classic rules of the Renaissance scholars were rejected, and a national romantic drama developed. In this the emphasis is on incident: the story, not the revelation of character, is the main thing. The *dramatis personæ* are not individualized characterizations, but merely instruments in the unfolding of a complex plot, full of surprises.

In Spain, as in the other countries of Europe, the liturgical mysteries became more and more secularized until at length the comic interludes, or the one-act episodes, were separated from the more didactic religious elements. Thus two distinct types continued side by side: The *auto sacramentale* (the religious play) and the *comedia* (realistic type).[1] These liturgical mysteries and popular farces of mediaeval Spain formed the basis of the sketches of the actor-playwright, **Lope de Rueda** (1510–1565), and of the interludes (*entremesas*) of his great contemporary, **Cervantes** (1547–1616). The latter, however, found his fame in the satirical romance, and left to others the task of establishing a national drama of Spain.

It remained for the genius of **Lope de Vega** (Lope Felix de Vega Carpo, 1562–1635) to crystallize these crude beginnings into the permanent form of romantic drama. De Vega crowded into his life almost every human experience,—from the exciting career of a soldier in the invincible Armada to the stern bigotry of a priest of the Inquisition. He was both famous and popular. His funeral was literally a nine days' wonder.

Although De Vega knew all about Horace and Plautus and Seneca and the Unities, he knew also the temper of his public; and since he wrote plays frankly to entertain, he explains in his *Arte nuevo de hacer comedias en este tiempo* (*New Art of Writing Plays in This Age*)[2] that he "locks in the precepts with six keys, banishes Terence and Plautus from his study," and writes "in accordance with that art which they devised who aspired to the applause of the crowd; for since the crowd pays for the comedies, it is fitting to talk foolishly to it to satisfy its taste." To the learned who do not approve of his dramas he gives this sensible advice: "Let not him who is offended go to see them."

De Vega is the most prolific dramatist that history records. He wrote at a low estimate at least 1500 plays, both secular and religious. He is most famous for his dramas of intrigue known as the *cloak-and-sword comedy* (*comedia de capa y espada*). In them the plot is full of surprising complications; for the plot, far more than any study of character, was what held the attention of the audience through tense moments of suspense and exciting incidents, such as disguises, assassinations, and hair-breadth escapes. The theme is honor,—family or personal honor in conflict with loyalty to the King or to the Church. The unities of time and place are thrown to the winds; and as the Spanish stage was without formal scenery, it was a simple matter to introduce into the three-act plays numerous scenes in as many different localities as the fertile brain of the dramatist could conceive. The tragic and the comic are intermingled. The style is grandiloquent or poetical; but in ludicrous contrast to the high-flown passion of the hero, the humor of the *gracioso* (comic servant) strikes the balance of common sense.

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[1] *Comedia* in Spain meant a *play* (of any type).

[2] Translation of W. T. Brewster.

The type into which Lope de Vega molded the national drama was further developed by his contemporary and successor, **Calderón** (Pedro Calderón de la Barca, 1600–1681). When Lope de Vega died, the King, Philip IV, appointed this brilliant young lawyer and playwright to be manager of the royal theatrical performances. Like his English contemporary Ben Jonson, Calderón produced gorgeous spectacles and plays for the court. For these he was knighted and pensioned by the King. His plays, which were first published when he was thirty-six, won him renown throughout Spain. However, Calderón was not content with the easy life of court favorite. He entered the army and did service in the field. Finally in 1651 he joined the priesthood for which he had been trained as a boy. Thereafter he devoted himself to writing religious allegorical plays for Corpus Christi day,—the *autos sacramentales,*—which were produced with royal splendor. Throughout his long life he is credited with at least seventy of these *autos,* and more than one hundred secular plays of all types:—tragedies, comedies, melodramas, and even operas.

Though more philosophical and poetical than De Vega, he modeled his plays on the same romantic type. Honor and vengeance are the determining motives. His plays are characterized by ingenious dramatic situations; lofty imagination; fiery passion; and a belief in the fundamental rights of all men, peasant as well as noble.

After the golden age of the seventeenth century Spanish drama lost its national stamp and developed into mere imitations of foreign models. Spain dwindled into a dependency of France; and French classicism became the prevailing mode in drama, until after the Napoleonic Wars when the romantic impulse stirred Spain again to produce extravagant and melodramatic plays.

## THE CONSTANT PRINCE

(El Principe Constante)

PEDRO CALDERÓN DE LA BARCA

*Before November 23, 1635*

Translated by Denis Florence MacCarthy

### PERSONS REPRESENTED

DON FERNANDO, } *Princes of Portugal*
DON ENRIQUE, }
DON JUAN COUTIÑO
ALPHONSO, *King of Portugal*
BRITO, *a Portuguese soldier*
THE KING OF FEZ
MULÉY, *his general*
TARUDANTE, *King of Morocco*
SELIM, *in the service of the King of Fez*
THE PRINCESS PHENIX, *daughter of the King of Fez*
ROSA, }
ZARA, } *her attendants*
ESTRELLA, }
ZELIMA, }
Soldiers, Christian Slaves, Musicians, Attendants, &c.

"The Constant Prince, *or rather* The Inflexible Prince, *is one of the most moving plays of Calderón. The Portuguese, after having driven the Moors from the whole western coast of the Peninsula, passed over into Africa to pursue still further the enemies* *of their faith. They undertook the conquest of Fez and Morocco. The same ardour led them to seek a new passage to the Indies, and to plant the standard of Portugal on the coast of Guinea, in the kingdom of Congo, at Mozambique, at Diu, at Goa, and Macao. John I. had conquered Ceuta. At his death he left several sons, all of whom wished to distinguish themselves against the infidels. Edward, who succeeded him, sent his two brothers, in the year 1483, with a fleet, to attempt the conquest of Tangiers. One of these was Ferdinand, the hero of Calderón, the most valiant of princes; the other was Henry, who was afterwards celebrated for his assiduous efforts in exploring the sea of Guinea, in order to discover the passage to the Indies. Their expedition is the subject of this tragedy."*—SISMONDI'S Literature of the South of Europe.

## ACT I

### SCENE I

*The Gardens of the King of Fez, by the Sea*

*Enter some Christian Captives singing, and* ZARA

*Zara.* Sing, from out this thicket here,
While the beauteous Phenix dresses;—
Those sweet songs, whose air expresses
Fond regrets; which pleased her ear
Often in the baths,—those strains
Full of grief and sentiment.—
*First Captive.* Can Music, whose strange instrument
Was our clanking gyves and chains—
Can it be, our wail could bring
Joy unto her heart? our woe
Be to her delight?—
*Zara.* 'Tis so:—
She from this will hear you; sing.
*2nd Cap.* Ah! this anguish doth exceed,
Beauteous Zara, all the rest—
Since from out a captive's breast
(Save a soulless bird's indeed)
Never has a willing strain
Of music burst.
*Zara.* But have not you
Yourselves sung many a time?—
*3rd Cap.* 'Tis true;
But then it was no stranger's pain
To which we hoped some ease to bring,
It was our own too bitter grief
For which in song we sought relief.
*Zara.* She is listening now—then sing.
*Captives* [*sing*].
Age doth not respect
The fair or the sublime;
Nothing stands erect
Before the face of time.

*Enter* ROSA

*Rosa.* Captives, you can now retire,
And your pleasing concert end,
For fair Phenix doth descend
To this garden, to inspire
Joy, where'er her footsteps stray:—
Coming like a second morn,
Young Aurora newly born.—
[*The Captives go out*

*Enter* PHENIX, *attended by her Moorish maidens,* ESTRELLA *and* ZELIMA, *&c. dressing her*

*Estrella.* Beauteous have you risen today.
*Zara.* Let the dawn, so purely bright,
Boast no more, this garden owes
To her its beauty—that the rose
Draws from her its purple light,
Or the jessamine its whiteness.
*Phenix.* The glass
*Est.* Thou should'st not strive to find
Specks the pencil ne'er designed
In its artificial brightness.
*They present her with a mirror.*
*Phe.* What does loveliness avail me,
(If, indeed, 'tis mine to vaunt it)—
If my joy of heart be wanted?—
If life's happiest feelings fail me?—
*Zelima.* How dost thou feel?
*Phe.* If I but knew,
Ah! my Zelima, how I feel,
That certain knowledge soon would steal
Half of the grief that pains me through:—
I do not know its nature wholly,
Although it robs my heart of gladness;
For now it seemeth tearful sadness,—
And now 'tis pensive melancholy:—
I only know, I know I feel—
But what I feel I do not know,—
The sweet illusions mock me so.

*Zara.* Since these gardens cannot steal
Away your oft-returning woes—
Though to beauteous spring, they build
Snow-white jasmine temples filled
With radiant statues of the rose,
Come unto the sea, and make
Thy bark the chariot of the sun.—
*Rosa.* And when the golden splendours run
Athwart the waves, along thy wake—
The garden to the sea will say
(By melancholy fears depressed),
The sun already gilds the west,
How very short has been this day!—
*Phe.* Ah! no more can gladden me
Sunny shores, or dark projections,
Where in emulous reflections
Blend the rival land and sea;
When, alike in charms and powers,
Where the woods and waves are meeting—
Flowers with foam are seen competing—
Sparkling foam with snow-white flowers;
For the garden, envious grown
Of the curling waves of ocean,
Loves to imitate their motion;
And the amorous zephyr, blown
Out to sea from fragrant bowers,
In the shining waters laving
Back returns, and makes the waving
Leaves an ocean of bright flowers:
When the sea too, sad to view
Its barren waste of waves forlorn,
Striveth swiftly to adorn
All its realm, and to subdue
The pride of its majestic mien,
To second laws it doth subject
Its nature, and with sweet effect
Blends fields of blue with waves of green.
Coloured now like heaven's blue dome,
Now plumed as if from verdant bowers,
The garden seems a sea of flowers,
The sea a garden of bright foam:
How deep my pain must be, is plain,
Since naught delights my heart or eye,
Nor earth, nor air, nor sea, nor sky.
*Zara.* Ah! deep, indeed, must be your pain!—

*Enter the* King *with a portrait in his hand*

*King.* If perchance the fever fit,
Quartan of thy beauty, let
Thee thy sadness to forget,—
This fair original (for it
Is too full of life, to be
But a picture) is the Infante[1]
Of Morocco, Tarudante,
Who doth come to offer thee
His hand and crown; do not reprove
The ambassador who pleads his suit—
Do not doubt that he, though mute,
Bringeth messages of love:—
With favour I his wish behold,
For he hath sent to me, as liege,
Ten thousand horsemen, to besiege
Ceuta, which I long to hold:—
Let nor fears, nor vain alarms,
Nor coldness in your heart be found;
But let him soon in Fez be crowned
King of all thy beauteous charms.
*Phe.* [*aside*]. Protect me, Allah!
*King.* What abhorred
Terror thus suspends thy breath?—
*Phe.* [*aside*]. It is the sentence of my death!
*King.* What is it you say?
*Phe.* [*aloud*]. My lord,
My master, and my king, to thee,
My father, what have I to say?—
[*Aside.*] What a happy chance, Muléy,
Hast thou lost! Ah! woe is me.
[*Aloud.*] Let my silence be a token
Of my dutiful reply.
[*Aside.*] In thinking it, my soul would lie,
My tongue would lie, if it had spoken.
*King.* Take the picture.
*Phe.* [*aside*]. Being desired,
My hand the hated gift hath got,
But my heart receives it not.
*The report of a cannon is heard.*
*Zara.* This salute, my lord, is fired
For Muléy, arrived to-day
In the Sea of Fez.
*King.* 'Tis meet.

*Enter* Muléy *with the truncheon of a general*

*Muléy.* Give me, mighty lord, thy feet.
*King.* You are welcome home, Muléy.

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[1] Infante: Prince

*Mul.* He who penetrates the light
Of so sovereign a sphere,
He who homeward drawing near
Finds a sun and dawn so sweet,
Well hath homeward come, indeed:—
Lady, let me kiss thy hand,
For *his* love and faith demand
Such reward, whose heart would bleed
To work his sovereign's least intent.
[*To the* King.]
For newer triumphs still he burns
In thy service.—[*Aside to* Phenix.] He returns
More thy lover than he went.
*Phe.* [*aside*]. Heaven protect me! [*To* Muléy.] Thou, indeed,
Art most welcome. [*Aside.*] Life doth leave me!
*Mul.* [*aside*]. If my eyes do not deceive me,
Rather the reverse I read.
*King.* Well, Muléy, what news from sea?—
*Mul.* Now thou'lt test thy suffering
Of misfortune: for I bring
Saddest news; [*aside.*] as mine must be.
*King.* What thou knowest, let me hear,
For a firm and constant mind
Lets both good and evil find
Equal entrance: sit thou here,
Phenix.
*Phe.* Yes.
*King.* Let all be seated.
Now proceed thy news to tell,
Hiding nothing.
*The* King *and ladies sit down.*
*Mul.* I, nor well
Can conceal it, or repeat it;—[*aside.*]
With two galliasses[1] only,
By command, my lord, of thee,
I departed to examine
All the coast of Barbary,
With the intention of approaching
That famed city of the South,
Known of old time as Eliza,
And which nearly at the mouth
Of the Herculean strait is founded;
Ceido is its latter name,—
For this Hebrew word and Ceuta[2]
In the Arabic are the same,
Both expressive but of beauty,
Or the ever-beauteous town,—
That fair town, that, like a jewel,
Heaven has snatched from out thy crown.
Through, perhaps, Mahomet's anger,
Through the mighty prophet's wrath,
Which, opprobrium of our valour!
Now a foreign ruler hath.
Where we tamely gape and gaze at,
Where our slavish eye-sight sees,
Floating from its topmast turrets,
Banners of the Portuguese.
'Neath our very eyes prescribing
Limits that our arms deride—
'Tis a mockery of our praises,
'Tis a bridle to our pride,
'Tis a Caucasus, which, lying
Midway, doth the stream detain;
Back thy Nile of victory turning
From its onward course to Spain.
Hither, then, I went with orders
To examine, and to see
What the form and disposition
Of the place to-day might be;
How, with less expense and danger,
You might undertake its siege.
May heaven grant its restoration
Quickly unto you, my liege!
Though it be delayed a little
By a threatened new disgrace;
For this doubtful undertaking
To another must give place,
Far more pressing and important,
Since the thousand swords and spears
That for Ceuta you have marshall'd
Must be drawn around Tangiers
For that threatened city weepeth
Equal suffering, equal woe,
Equal ruin, equal trouble—
This, my gracious lord, I know.
For one morning on the ocean,
When the half-awaken'd sun,
Trampling down the lingering shadows
Of the western vapours dun,
Spread his ruby-tinted tresses
Over jessamine and rose,
Dried with cloths of gold, Aurora's
Tears of mingled fire and snows,
Which to pearls his glance converted.

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[1] two galliasses . . .
"My father hath no less
Than three great argosies, besides two *galliasses*,
And twelve light gallies."—
Shakespeare.

[2] Ceuta (sū′ tȧ; Sp. thā′ ōō-tä): town on the Moorish coast opposite Gibraltar.

It was then that, in the light
Of the horizon, a vast navy
Rose upon my startled sight:
First (so many a fair illusion
Oft the wandering seaman mocks),
I could not determine truly
Whether they were ships or rocks;
For, as on the coloured canvass
Subtle pencils softly blend
Dark and bright, in such proportions
That the dim perspectives end—
Now, perhaps, like famous cities,
Now, like caves or misty capes,
For remoteness ever formeth
Monstrous and unreal shapes.
Thus, athwart the fields of azure,
Lights and shades alternate fly;
Clouds and waves in rich confusion,
Intermingling sea and sky,
Mock the sight with fair deceptions.
So it was, while I, alone,
Saw their bulk and vast proportions,
Though their form remained unknown.
First they seemed to us uplifting
High in heaven their pointed towers,
Clouds that to the sea descended,
To conceive in sapphire showers
What they would bring forth in crystal.
And this fancy seemed more true,
As from their untold abundance
They, methought, could drink the blue
Drop by drop. Again, sea-monsters,
Seemed to us the wandering droves,
Which, to form the train of Neptune,
Issued from their green alcoves.
For the sails, when lightly shaken,
Fanned by zephyrs as by slaves,
Seemed to us like outspread pinions,
Fluttering o'er the darkened waves;
Then the mass, approaching nearer,
Seemed a mighty Babylon,
With its hanging gardens pictured
By the streamers floating down.
But, although our certain vision
Undeceived, becoming true,
Showed it was a great armada,
For I saw the prows cut through
Foam, that, sparkling in the sunshine,
Like the fleece of snow-white flocks,
Rolled itself in silver mountains,
Curdled into crystal rocks.
I, so great a foe, beholding,
Turned my prow with utmost speed,
For a timely flight doth often
But to quicker victory lead—
And from being more experienced
In those seas, the entrance made,
Of a little creek, where, hidden
In the shelter and the shade,
I could best resist the powerful
Fury of a power so vast,
Which sea, sky and earth o'ershadowed;
Without seeing us, they passed:—
I, desiring to discover
(Who would not desire to know?)
Whither did this great armada
O'er the darkened ocean go—
Once again my anchor weighing,
Sought the blue sea's level plain,
And full knowledge, in this manner,
Heaven permitted me to gain:—
For I saw, of this armada
But one ship remained behind,
Which with difficulty struggled
With the warring wave and wind:
Since, as afterwards was told me,
From a tempest which had blown
Over all the fleet, it issued
Rent, disabled, and o'erthrown;
And so full of water was she,
That the men that worked thereat,
Scarcely baled her out, and reeling
Now on this side, now on that,
Seemed, with every fluctuation,
On the point of going down.
I approached, and though my Moorish
Garb and colours made them frown,
Still my company consoled them,
For companionship in woes
Ever gives alleviation,
Even though it be a foe's.
The desire of life arising
So provoked the hearts of some,
That by ladders made of twisted
Cords and cables, did they come
To our ship, although a prison;
But the rest, resisting, cried,
"Life is but to live with honour!"—
Proof of Portuguese vain pride!—
One of those who left the vessel
Thus informed me in detail:
Lately, thus he said, from Lisbon
Did the great armada sail
For Tangiers: and its heroic
Resolution seems to be,
To besiege it with such valour,
That upon its towers you'll see

The five shields,[1] you see at Ceuta
Every time the sun doth rise.
Edward, Portugal's great monarch,
Whose renown of conquest flies
As on wings of Roman eagles,
Has sent thither to preside
Over them his own two brothers,
Fernando and Enrique,—pride
Of this age, which early sees them
Crowned with conquest: and each chief
Is Grand Master both of Avis[2]
And of Christ: in white relief
On their breasts they bear two crosses,
One of green, the other red;
Fourteen thousand is the number
Of the paid troops, thither led—
Without mentioning the many
Volunteers, that with them serve,
At their own expense; a thousand
Are the steeds—whose fire and nerve,
Mixed with Spanish mettle, clothe them
With the tiger's glossy skin
And the swift foot of the panther:—
Now perhaps they enter in
Tangiers' waters,—at this moment,
If its shore they have not made,
They at least cleave through its waters:
Let us hasten to its aid:
You yourself, your arms assuming,
Mahomet's dread scourges bear—
And the brightest leaf it carries,
From death's mystic volume, tear:—
That this day may be accomplished
That brave prophecy of yore—
Of the Moors, which says, 'tis destined
That upon the sandy shore
Of our Africa, the glory
Of the crown of Portugal
There its hapless grave must meet with.
And these proud invaders shall
See thee, as thy curved sword waveth
O'er each prostrate foeman's head,
Turn the fields, both green and azure,
With their gushing hearts—blood red.
*King.* Silence! do not speak the rest,
For my heart such wrath is feeling,
That each word is like the stealing
Of strong poison through my breast:
Graves amid the deserts yonder
I will ope, by sure disasters,
For the Infantes, those Grand Masters
Who have hither dared to wander:—
You, Muléy, along the coast
With a troop of horse depart,
And by every means that art
Can devise, engage the host
In such skirmishes of skill
That they cannot make the land
Until I can be at hand:—
And in doing so, you will
Show the blood that fills your veins.
I shall follow with all speed,
And the gallant rear-guard lead
Of the troops that fill these plains:
Thus, to-day, my many cares
And quarrels shall in one combine,
For great Ceuta shall be mine
And Tangiers shall not be theirs.
[*Exit*

*Mul.* Though I must depart, yet I,
Lady, first would let thee hear,
Since my death approacheth near,
The malady with which I die.
And although my jealous fear
Disrespectful seem to thee,
Since my disease is jealousy,
Courtesy must disappear.
What picture—(ah! fair enemy!)
Is this thy beauteous fingers bear?
What is his happy name?—declare,
This favoured being, who is he?
But no; let not thy tongue eclipse
The pain thy touch hath made me bear;
Since in thy hand I see him there,
Thou needst not name him with thy lips!
*Phe.* Although, Muléy, thou hast from me
Leave to love and to attend me,
Thou hast not any to offend me.
*Mul.* 'Tis true, fair Phenix, yes, I see
That this is not the mode or style
Of speaking to thee; but the skies
Know, when jealous thoughts arise
Respect is overborne a while.
With utmost caution—secret pride—
I've hid the passion that I feel;
But, though my love I could conceal,
My jealousy I cannot hide—
In truth I cannot.
*Phe.* Though thy crime
Deserves not to be satisfied,
Still, will I, through wounded pride,
Satisfy thee this one time.
Friends their friendship ne'er should lose,
When a word might keep it still.

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[1] **five shields**: the arms of Portugal.

[2] **Avis**: the Order of St. Benedict of Aviz, a religious military order of Portugal, founded in 1162.

*Mul.* And wilt thou speak that word?
*Phe.* I will.
*Mul.* God grant thee ever happy news!
*Phe.* This picture has to me been sent. . . . .
*Mul.* By whom?
*Phe.* His Highness the Infante
Of Morocco, Tarudante.
*Mul.* And why?
*Phe.* It seems with this intent,—
My father, being ignorant
Of my feelings . . . .
*Mul.* Well?—
*Phe.* Pretends
That their realms . . . .
*Mul.* Is this the amends,
The satisfaction, thou dost grant?—
God grant thee evil news instead!—
*Phe.* Why for a fault must I atone
That was my father’s act alone?
*Mul.* For taking, though he left thee dead,
This picture as a willing bride?
*Phe.* Could I prevent it?
*Mul.* Yes, ’tis plain.
*Phe.* How?
*Mul.* Some excuse thou well couldst feign.
*Phe.* What could I do?
*Mul.* Thou couldst have died,
As I would gladly do for thee.
*Phe.* ’Twas force prevailed.
*Mul.* A mere pretence—
’Twas fickleness.
*Phe.* ’Twas violence.
*Mul.* Nor violence.
*Phe.* What could it be?
*Mul.* Absence has been my hope’s dark tomb;
And since I cannot be secure,
Nor fix thy changing fancy sure,
I must return and meet my doom.
Thou wilt return, fair Phenix, too,
Once more to grieve me to the heart.
*Phe.* We now must separate: depart—
*Mul.* My soul first separates in two.
*Phe.* Thou to Tangiers, and I shall wait
In Fez—to hear thee make an end
Of thy complaints.
*Mul.* And I’ll attend,
If I am spared till then by fate.
*Phe.* Adieu! for it is heaven’s decree
We taste this bitter parting’s woe.
*Mul.* But listen—wilt thou let me go,
Nor give that portrait up to me?
*Phe.* ’Twere thine but for the king’s request.
*Mul.* Release it—justice doth demand
That I should pluck from out thy hand
Him who has plucked me from thy breast. [*Exeunt*

## SCENE II

*The Sea-Coast near Tangiers*

*Amid the sound of trumpets and the noise of disembarking, enter* DON FERNANDO, DON ENRIQUE, DON JUAN COUTIÑO, *and Soldiers successively from their ships*

*Fernando.* I must be first, fair Africa, to tread
Upon the sandy margin of thy shore;
That as thou feelest on thy prostrate head
The weight of my proud footsteps trampling o’er,
Thou may’st perceive to whom thy sway is given.
*Enrique.* I am the second whom the swift waves bore
To tread this Africa!
[*He stumbles and falls.*]
Preserve me, Heaven!
Even here my evil auguries pursue.
*Fern.* Let not, Enrique, thy stout heart be riven
By fancied omens, as weak women do;
This fall should waken hopes and not alarms.
The land a fitting welcome gives to you,
For, as its lord, it takes you to its arms.
*Enr.* The sight of us the Moorish herd appalls,
And they have fled, deserting fields and farms.
*Juan.* Tangiers has closed the gates around its walls.
*Fern.* They all have fled for safer shelter there.
On you, Don Juan, Count Miralva, falls
The duty of examining with care
All the approaches of the land, before

The sultry sun, o'ercoming with its glare
The temperate dawn, oppress and wound us more.
Salute the city; call on it to yield;
Say 'tis in vain to squander human gore
In its defence; for though each conquered field
Ran red with blood, and burning blew the wind,
And 'neath our tread the tottering ramparts reeled,
We still would take it.
*Juan.* You will quickly find
I'll reach its gates, although, volcano-like,
With thickest clouds it strikes the bright sun blind,
And lightnings flash and bolts around me strike! [*Exit*

*Enter* Brito

*Brito.* Thanks be to God! that April and sweet May
Once more I walk on, and that, as I like,
Without unpleasant reelings and dismay
I go about upon the solid ground.
Not as just now at sea, when, yea or nay,
Within a wooden monster's caverns bound,
Though light of foot I could not get away
Even when in greatest fear of being drown'd.
So little weary of the world am I,
O dry land, mine! obtain for me, I pray,
That I may never in the water die,
Nor even on land till near to the last day.
*Enr.* [*to* Fernando]. Why dost thou listen to this fool?
*Fern.* And why,
Against all reason, dost thou persevere
In vague forebodings and unreal grief!
*Enr.* My soul is full of some mysterious fear;—
That Fate frowns darkly is my fixed belief;
For since I saw fair Lisbon disappear,
Its well-known heights fast fading one by one—
Of all the thoughts that haunt me Death is chief!
Scarcely had we our enterprise begun,
Scarce had our ships commenced their onward chase,
When, in a paroxysm, the great sun,
Shrouded in clouds, concealed his golden face,
And angry waves in foaming madness wreck'd
Some of our fleet. Where'er I look I trace
The same disaster;—O'er the sea project
A thousand shadows;—If I view the sky,
Its azure veil with bloody drops seems fleck'd;—
If to the once glad air I turn mine eye,
Dark birds of night their mournful plumage wave;—
If on the earth, my fall doth prophesy
And represent my miserable grave.
*Fern.* Let me decipher with affectionate care,
And so your breast from dark forebodings save,
These fancied omens from earth, sea, and air:
'Tis true we lost one ship amid the main;
That is to say, that we had troops to spare
From the great conquest we have come to gain.
The purple light that stains the radiant sky
Foretells a day of jubilee, not pain.
The monstrous shapes that round us float or fly,
Flew here, and floated ere we came; and thus
If they reveal a fatal augury,
It is to those who live here, not to us.
These idle fancies and unfounded fears
Came from the Moors, so darkly credulous,
Not from the enlightened minds of Christian seers.
Those who believe in them may feel alarms,
Not those who shut them from their doubting ears.
We two are Christians; we have taken arms,
Not through vainglory, nor the common prize
With which young Fame the soldier's bosom charms;

Nor that, perchance, in deathless books, men's eyes
Hereafter read of this great victory.
The faith of God we come to aggrandise;
Whether it be our fate to live or die,
Be His alone the glory and the praise.
'Tis true, we should not God's dread vengeance try
Too rashly; but his anger knoweth ways
To curb the proud, and make the haughty bend.
You are a Christian; act a Christian's part:
We come to serve our God, and not offend.
But who is this?—

*Enter* Don Juan

*Juan.* My lord, obeying
Your commands, I sought the walls;
And when crossing o'er the mountain,
Where the sloping verdure falls,
I beheld a troop of horsemen
Riding by the road to Fez—
Riding with such wondrous fleetness
That the startled gazer says,
Are they birds, or are they horses?
Do they fly, or do they bound?
For the air doth not sustain them,
And they scarcely touch the ground.
Even the earth and air were doubtful
If they flew, or if they ran.
*Fern.* Let us hasten to receive them,
Placing foremost in the van
Those who bear the arquebuses;
Let the horsemen next advance,
With the customary splendour
Of the harness and the lance.
On, Enrique! fortune offers
Now a noble opening fight.
Courage!
*Enr.* Am I not thy brother?
Nothing can my soul affright,
Nor the accidents of fortune,
Nor the countenance of death!
[*Exeunt*

*Brito* [*alone*]. I must somehow act the soldier,
And *keep guard* upon—my breath!
What a very noble skirmish!
How they spill their blood and brains!
It is best, from under cover
To survey this "Game of Canes!"—
[*Exit*

### Scene III

*A charge is sounded: enter* Don Juan *and* Don Enrique, *fighting with the Moors*

*Enr.* After them! The Moors already,
Vanquished, from the fight have flown!—
*Juan.* Spoils of mingled men and horses
Over all the fields are strown.
*Enr.* Where has wandered Don Fernando,
That he cannot be descried?—
*Juan.* Doubtless his impatient valour
Leads him onward far and wide.
*Enr.* Let us seek him out, Coutiño,
*Juan.* I am ever at thy side.
[*Exeunt*

*Enter* Don Fernando *with the sword of Muléy, and* Muléy *with his shield alone*

*Fern.* In this desolate campagna,
Where, devoid of sense or breath,
Lie so many dead, or rather
In this theatre of death,
You alone, of all your people,
You alone, brave Moor, have stood:
All have fled, and even your war-horse,
After shedding seas of blood,
'Mid the dust and foam encircled,
Which it raised, and which it laid,
Leaves you here to be a trophy,
By my valorous right-hand made,
'Mid your late companions' horses,
Loosely flying o'er the ground.
I am prouder of this conquest,
Which to me doth more redound,
Than to see this broad campagna,
As with bright carnations crowned;
For so great has been the flowing
Of red blood on all around,
That my eyes, through deepest pity,
At beholding naught but dead—
Naught but ever new misfortunes—
Naught but ruins round me spread,—
O'er the desert plain went seeking
One green spot amid the red.
In effect, my arm subduing
Your courageous strength to mine,
'Mid the horses loosely flying,
One I seized, who was, in fine,

Such a prodigy, a wonder,
That, although he had for sire
Even the wind, his proud ambition
Claimed adoption of the fire;
Falsely thus, by both denying
His own hue, which being white,
Said the water, "'Tis the offspring
Of my sphere so silver white.
I alone could thus have moulded
Such a form of curdled snow!"
Like the wind he went in fleetness,
Lightning-like flashed to and fro;
Like the swan his dazzling whiteness,
Speckled like the snake with blood,
Proud of his unrivall'd beauty,
Fearless in his haughtier mood;
Full of spirit in his neighing;
In his fetlocks firm and strong,
In the saddle, on his haunches,
You and I thus borne along—
On a sea of blood we entered,
Through whose cruel waves we steered,
Like an animated vessel,
For his head a prow appeared,
Breaking through the pearl-hued water.
And his mane and tail did float,
Blood and foam besprinkled over,
So that once again a boat,
Wounded by four spurs, he bounded,
As if heaven's four winds impelled;
He at length fell down exhausted
By the Atlas he upheld;—
For so great are some misfortunes,
That even brutes themselves must feel,
Or it may be, that some instinct
Through his softened soul did steal,
Saying, "Sad Arabia journeys,
And with joy departeth Spain;
Can I then betray my country,
Swelling the proud conqueror's train?
No, I do not wish to wander
One step farther from this spot."
And since thou thyself art coming
In such sorrow, though 'tis not
By the mouth or eyes acknowledged,
Still the smothered fire appears,
Of the bosom's hid volcanos,
By those flowing tender tears;
And the burning sighs thou heavest,
Wonderingly my valour views,
When I turn me round, how fortune
With one single blow subdues
Valour such as thine. Another
Cause, methinks, must sadden thee;
Since it is not just nor proper,
Even though for liberty,
That the man should weep so fondly,
Who so heavily can wound;
And, as in communicating
Evils, there is ever found
Something soothing to the feelings,
While we to my people go,
If I merit such a favour,
My desire is now to know,—
And with reason it entreats it,
Gently and with courtesy,—
What doth grieve thee? since 'tis certain
'Tis not thy captivity.
Sorrow, when communicated,
Is appeased, if not subdued,—
And since I have been the occasion
Partly of what hath ensued
From the accident of fortune,
I would wish to be likewise
Prompt in bringing consolation
To the cause of all thy sighs,
If the cause itself consenteth.
*Mul.* Thou art truly valiant, Spaniard,
Victor both in act and word,
With the tongue as skilled to conquer,
As to conquer with the sword;
For my life was thine, when lately
With the sword my race among,
You subdued me, but this moment,
Since you take me with the tongue,
Even my soul is thine; with reason
Must my life and soul confess
They are thine, and thou their master.
For your arms and your address,
Cruel now, and now too clement,
Twice my soul have captive made.
Moved with pity to behold me,
Spaniard, you the cause have prayed
Of the burning sighs I'm breathing.
And although I own that woe,
When repeated, is accustomed
To grow lighter, still I know
That the person who repeats it
Wisheth that it should be so;
But *my* woe is such a master
Of my pleasures, that to keep
Them from any diminution,
Though itself be wide and deep,
It would rather not repeat it;
But 'tis needful I obey;
Grateful for the care you've shown me.

I am called the Cheik[1] Muléy,
And the King of Fez's nephew.
Of an illustrious race and high,
Boasting many a Bey and Pasha.[2]
But misfortune's son am I;
Being on life's early threshold
Folded in the arms of death,
On that plain, where many Spaniards
Found their graves, I first drew breath;
Hopeless boon to me that breathing!
For at Gelves, which you know,
I was born the year that witnessed
There, thy nation's overthrow.
To attend the King my uncle,
Came I young—but since increase
Day by day my pains and sorrows,
Cease enjoyments, wholly cease!
I to Fez came, and a beauty,
Whom since then my wondering eye
Worshipped, in the house adjoining
Lived, that I might, near her, die.
From the early years of childhood,
(For this love of mine became
Soon so constant, Time was powerless
To consume or quench its flame,)
We grew up beside each other.
Love within our childish hearts
Was not like the rapid lightning,
Which with greater fury darts
On the tender, weak, and humble,
Than upon the proud and strong;
So that he to show the varied
Powers that to love belong
Struck our hearts with different arrows;
But as water in its course
Dropping down on stone, doth mark it,
Not indeed through its own force,
No, but by continual falling,
So those tears of mine, for aye
On her heart's-stone downward dropping,
Finally did work their way
To it, though than diamond harder.
And by dint of constant love,
And through no excelling merits,
Finally did make it move.
In this state I lived a season,
Oh! how swift has been its flight!
Tasting, in their sweet aurora,
Many an amorous delight—
In an evil hour I left her,
Left her! more I need not say,
Since in my absence came another
Lover, all my peace to slay;
He is happy, I am wretched.
He is present, I away.
I a captive, he a freeman.
Ah! our fates how different,
Since your arm hath made me captive,
See how justly I lament.
*Fern.* Valiant-hearted Moor and gallant,
If thou adorest in this way,
If, as thou speakest, thou dost worship
If thou dost love as thou dost say;
If thou art jealous as thou sighest,
If thou dost fear with true dismay,
If thou dost love as thou dost suffer,
Thou sufferest in the happiest way,
And the acceptance of thy freedom
Is all the ransom thou must pay,
Return at once unto thy people,
And this unto thy lady say,
"That thou dost take me as thy servant,
A knight of Portugal doth pray;"
If she pretends her obligation
For this, to me, some price must pay,
I give to thee whate'er is owing,
So let her love the debt repay.
And thine be all the arrears of interest.
And see thy horse, which lately lay
Exhausted on the ground, hath risen
Refreshed and rested by our stay;
And since I know love's longing nature,—
How ill the absent brook delay,
I wish no longer to detain thee,
Mount on thy steed and go away.
*Mul.* My voice to thee, doth answer nothing;
The flattery of a liberal heart
Is the acceptance of its offer:
Only tell me who thou art?
*Fern.* A man of noble birth, no further.
*Mul.* Whoe'er thou art, thy conduct gave
This answer: I, through good and evil,
Am eternally thy slave.
*Fern.* Take the horse; it groweth late.
*Mul.* If it appeareth so to thee,
How more to him who came a captive,
And to his lady goeth free?
[*Exit*

*Fern.* 'Tis generous to bestow a favour,
How much more, life?
*Mul.* [*within*]. Brave Portuguese.

[1] **Cheik:** shiek, an Arab chief.

[2] **Bey and Pasha:** titles given to officials of high rank.

*Fern.* 'Tis from the horse's back he speaketh;
What is it now that thou dost please?
*Mul.* [*within*]. To pay thee for so many favours,
Some day the duty shall be mine.
*Fern.* May thou enjoy them!
*Mul.* [*within*]. A good action
Is never wholly lost; in fine,
Allah be thy protection, Spaniard!
*Fern.* If God be Allah, be he thine!
[*Trumpets resound from within.*]
But what trumpet's this, whose sound
Thus disturbs the air, and echoeth o'er the ground?
[*Drums from the opposite side.*]
And in this direction too
Drums are heard, the music of the two
Is that of Mars.

*Enter* Don Enrique

*Enr.* As swift as thought,
Have I, Fernando, for thy presence sought.
*Fern.* Brother, what hath happened?
*Enr.* These loud echoes
Rise from the troops of Fez, and from Morocco's,
For Tarudante hither flies
With succour to the king of Fez, who comes likewise,
Swollen with pride with all his troops around,
So that two mighty armies ours surround,
And their circling lines extend so far,
That we invaders and invaded are;
If upon one we turn our backs,
Badly we'll bear the other's fierce attacks,
For here and there around our leagured line
The dazzling lightnings of red Mars outshine:
What shall we do in such disastrous plight?
*Fern.* What? Why in the fight,
With fearless minds, we'll die as brave men should.
Are we not Masters?—Princes of the blood?
Although it were enough that we had been
Two Portuguese, that never could be seen
Upon our faces any mark of fear;
Let Avis, then, and Christ our Saviour dear,
Be our resounding battle-cry,
Let us for the faith now die,
Since our death was here foreseen.

*Enter* Don Juan

*Juan.* Our landing here has most unlucky been.
*Fern.* This is no time to think of means gone by,
Upon our swords alone for help let us rely,
Since we betwixt two armies' loud alarms
Are placed—Avis and Christ!—
*Juan.* To arms! to arms!
[*Exeunt with drawn swords. Sounds of a battle are heard*

*Enter* Brito

Since betwixt two armies we
Are placed, there is no human remedy.
What a scurvy speech is this
Would that the key that locks the realms of bliss
In yonder sky, would open but a chink,
Through which securely a poor wretch might slink
Who hath wandered to this spot,
Nor knoweth wherefore or for what;
But I will pretend to die,
Hoping, hereafter, death will pass me by.
*He lies down on the ground.*

*Enter a* Moor *fighting with* Don Enrique

*Moor.* Who is it that thus his breast defendeth
Against my arm, which like a bolt descendeth
From the fourth sphere of the skies?
*Enr.* One who, though he stumbles, falls, and dies
Upon his fellow Christians' corses,[1]—
Dreads no living foeman's forces,—
For who I am, let this be said.
[*They walk over* Brito *and exeunt*

*Enter* Muléy *and* Don Juan Coutiño *in conflict*

*Mul.* Valiant Portuguese, to see
Thy strength so great doth grieve not me,

---

[1] corses: corpses.

For I would wish that thou shouldst gain
The victory to-day.
*Juan.* Oh! bitter pain,
Without consideration do I tread
Upon these corses of the Christian dead!—
*Brito* [*aside*]. I would let him pardoned be,
If my lord would lightlier tread on me.
[MULÉY *and* JUAN *exeunt*

*Enter* DON FERNANDO *retiring before the* KING *and the Moors*

*King.* Yield thy sword, brave Portuguese,
If my hand alive can seize
And keep you captive, I do vow
To be thy friend: say, who art thou?
*Fern.* A cavalier: no more reply
Expect to hear: now let me die!—

*Enter* DON JUAN *and places himself by his side*

*Juan.* First, great lord, my breast will be
A diamond wall to shelter thee,
Placed before thee in the strife
I still will guard thy princely life.
Now, my Fernando, by thy deeds declare
The race of which thou art the heir.
*King.* If this I hear, what more do I expect?
Suspend your arms!—no happier effect
From this day's glory any more can be,
This prize is victory enough for me:—
If you must die, or else a captive be,
Accept the sentence given by fate's decree:
Thy sword, Fernando,—give it up to me,
The King of Fez.

*Enter* MULÉY

*Mul.* [*aside*]. Ah! who is this I see?—
*Fern.* Only unto a king's hand would I loose it:
Indeed, 'twere desperation to refuse it.

*Enter* DON ENRIQUE

*Enr.* Is my brother taken?—
*Fern.* Do not thou,
Enrique, add to my misfortune now
By your lamenting. Fate high lessons grants,
Even in the common accidents of chance.
*King.* Enrique, in my power
Lies Don Fernando, and although this hour,
Showing the vantage I have won
I could command your deaths; yet, as I've done
Naught to-day, but in my own defence,
I can the easier with your blood dispense,
Since to me survives
A wider fame, by sparing of your lives;
And that *you* [*to* ENRIQUE.] may bring
With greater speed his ransom from the king,
Do you return: but in my power
Fernando stays, until doth shine the hour
That you return to set him free:—
But say to Edward, *that* will never be,
That vain are all entreaties and demands,
Till Ceuta is surrendered to my hands;—
And now, your Highness, my illustrious foe,
To whom that greatness I shall owe,
Come to Fez with me.
*Fern.* I go
To that sphere, whose rays I follow here below.
*Mul.* [*aside*]. Must I ever mourn,
By friendship's ties, and love's suspicions torn!
*Fern.* Enrique, though a prisoner here,
Nor fate, nor fortune's malice do I fear:
Say to our brother, be thou of strong heart,
And firmly act a Christian prince's part
In my misfortunes.
*Enr.* Who is so unjust,
That would his magnanimity distrust?
*Fern.* This again I charge you, and I say,
Let him act the Christian.
*Enr.* I obey,
And vow full early to return as such.
*Fern.* Let me embrace thee.
*Enr.* Is it not too much
That thou a captive still new bonds dost take?
*Folds him in his arms.*

*Fern.* Adieu, Don Juan.
*Juan.* I will not forsake
My gracious prince, so drive me not away!
*Fern.* O loyal friend!
*Enr.* O most unhappy day!
*Fern.* Say to the king......but no, 'tis better say
Nothing; in silence, which my grief doth smother,
Bear thou these tears unto the king, my brother. [*Exeunt*

*Enter two* MOORS, *who see* BRITO *lying as dead*

*1st Moor.* Here is a Christian lying dead.
*2nd Moor.* Let us, lest a plague should spread,
Throw these corses in the sea.
*Brito* [*starting up*]. First your skulls must opened be
By such cuts and thrusts as these;
For, even dead, we still are Portuguese.
[*Exit, pursuing them with his sword*

## ACT II

### SCENE I

### *A Mountain District near Fez*

*Enter* PHENIX

*Phe.* Estrella! Zara! Rosa! no,
No one answers to my calling!
*Mul.* [*entering*]. One attends thee, like the falling
Shadow which the sun doth throw
Off its radiant disk. For thou
Dost a sun to me appear—
Who am the shadow that it hath.
As I roamed this mountain path,
Thy sweet voice re-echoed near.
What hath happened lady?
*Phe.* Hear,
If I can its nature state:
Flattering, free, ungrateful, glides
Sweet and smooth, with peaceful tides,
A crystal fountain, all elate
With waves of molten silver plate.
Flattering, for it proferreth
Speech enough, yet doth not feel;
Smooth, for it can well conceal;
Free, for loud it uttereth;
Sweet, because it murmureth;
And ungrateful, for it flies!
To that fountain's shady place,
Wearied with a wild beast's chase,
Came I with a glad surprise,
For its fresh green canopies
Promised rest and relaxation;
Being upon one side bound
By a gentle hillock, crowned
With (as if for jubilation)
Wreaths of jasmine and carnation,
Which a shade of crimson light
Flung upon my emerald bed.
Scarcely had I render'd
Up my soul to the delight
Of solitude, when, 'mid the bright
Leaves, did me a sound alarm;
I attentive looked, and saw
An ancient dame of Africa—
A spirit in a human form,
Marked with all that can deform—
Wrinkles, scowling, haggard, dark—
A living skeleton, a shade;
But as if with features made
Of a tree's trunk, rude and stark,
Wrapt in rough, unpolished bark;
With mingled melancholy and
Sadness—doleful passions these,
That my heart's blood she might freeze,
She did take me by the hand,
I, to be like her, did stand
Tree-like, rooted to the ground;
Ice ran freezing through each vein
At her touch, and through my brain
Venomed horror flew its round.
She, with scarce articulate sound,
Thus appeared to speak to me—
"Hapless woman! fated woe!
Since, with all thy beauteous show,
All the graces crowning thee,
Thou a corse's prize must be!"
Thus she said, and thus I live
Sadly since, or rather die,
Waiting till the prophecy
Which that tree-like fugitive
Did with doubtful meaning give—
Which that prophet, through the force
Of fate fulfilled without remorse—
Is fulfilled by destiny.
Woe is me! for I must be
The worthless guerdon of a corse! [*Exit*
*Mul.* It is easy to explain
This illusion, or this dream,
Since, indeed, it doth but seem

An image of my bosom's pain:
Tarudante is to gain
Thee; but though my heart doth burst
At the thought, my wrath and hate
Shall compel his joy to wait.
Never shall occur the worst,
Until he shall slay me first!
I may lose thee, that may be,
But I cannot lose and live:
Since my life I then must give,
Ere I come that hour to see,
The life that must abandon me
Is the price that buyeth thee;
Thou wilt then too surely be
The guerdon of a corse—for I
Shall be seen to pine and die
Through envy, love, and jealousy.

*Enter three Christian Captives with the* INFANTE DON FERNANDO

*1st Cap.* From the royal gardens near,
Where we work, we saw your Grace
Lately going to the chase,
And together we come here,
At your feet, in tears, to throw us.
*2nd Cap.* 'Tis the only consolation
Heaven doth grant our situation.
*3rd Cap.* It, in this, doth pity show us.
*Fern.* Friends, come, let my arms enfold you;
And, God knows, if I, with these,
Could your necks a moment ease
Of the knots and bonds that hold you,
They would give you liberty,
Even before myself. But heaven
May this punishment have given
As a favour, it may be,
As a blessing, if we knew it.
Fate may better grow ere long;
No misfortune is so strong
But that patience may subdue it.
Bear with that whatever sorrow
Time or fortune makes you see;
For that fickle deity,
Now a flower, a corse to-morrow,
Ever changing o'er and o'er—
Yours may alter in a trice;
But, O God! to give advice
To the needy, and no more,
Is not wisdom. I would give
Gladly aught that would relieve you,
But, alas, I've naught to give you;
You the want, my friends, forgive.
I, from Portugal, expect
Succour—it will quickly come;
Yours will be whatever sum
May be sent for that effect.
I desire it but for ye,
If they come to lead away
Me from slavery, I say
That you all must come with me:—
Go, in God's name, to your tasks,
No offence, your masters giving.
*1st Cap.* Lord, to know that thou art living,
Is the only joy that asks
Our enslavement.
*2nd Cap.* May the years
Of the Phenix be but few
To those granted unto you,
Gracious lord, to live.
[*The Captives go out*
*Fern.* With tears
Must the soul refuse relief,
Which their wretched state demands,
Bearing nothing from my hands;
Who will succour them? What grief!
*Mul.* I have stood with admiration,
Seeing the humane affection
With which you the deep dejection
Of these captives' situation
Have relieved.
*Fern.* My grief was shown
Truly for the hapless state
Of these captives. By their fate
I may learn to bear my own;
It may be, perhaps, that some
Day the lesson I may need.
*Mul.* Says your Highness this indeed?
*Fern.* Born an Infante, I have come
To be a slave; and thus, I fear,
That from this, I yet may know
Even a lower depth of woe;
For the distance is less near
From an Infante, a king's brother,
And a captive, than can be
'Twixt degrees of slavery.
One day followeth another,
And thus sorrow follows sorrow,
Pains with pains thus intertwine.
*Mul.* Would no heavier pain were mine!
You, your Highness, may to-morrow
(Though to-day you here remain
In a brief captivity),
Your dear native country see;

But for me all hope is vain,
Fortune never will be seen
To grow kinder unto me,
Though the moon less fickle be.
*Fern.* At the court of Fez I've been
Now some time, yet you have not,
Of the love you once confest,
Told me aught.
*Mul.* Within my breast
Lie the favours I have got;
Those I've sworn to conceal:
But to friendship's laws I bow,
Without breaking of my vow,
I a little may reveal:—
Without equal is her scorn,
So the grief my heart doth prove,
For the Phenix and my love
Were without their fellow born.
In seeing, hearing, and concealing
A Phenix, is my every thought;
A Phenix every love-distraught
Apprehension, fear, and feeling;
It is a Phenix that doth ope
The source of every pain and tear.
To feel I merit her yet fear,
A Phenix also is my hope.
The passion that I late revealed
Is now the Phenix I discover;
Thus, as a friend, and as a lover,
I both have spoken and concealed.
[*Exit*

*Fern.* With heart as skilful as discreet,
He thus his lady's name makes plain,
But if a Phenix be his pain,
I with it cannot compete:—
Mine is but a common pain,
And calmly should be borne as such,
Many have endured as much
Without boasts or wailings vain.

*Enter the* KING

*King.* By this mountain's brow, your Highness,
Have I to overtake you ridden,
That before the sun in coral
And in pearly clouds is hidden,
You the struggles of a tiger
In the meshes might admire,
For a circle now is closing
Round it by the huntsmen.
*Fern.* Sire,
Every moment art thou planning
Means of pleasing me. If this
Is the way thy slaves thou fêtest,
They will not their country miss.
*King.* Captives of such rare endowments,
That they to their owner pay
Highest honour, is the reason
They are treated in this way.

*Enter* DON JUAN

*Don Juan.* Come, my lord, unto the sea-shore,
And behold the fairest creature
That the hand of art e'er fashioned,
Or the mystic power of nature.
For, but now, a Christian galley
To our port has come; so fair,
That although her darkened bulwarks
Black and mournful colours wear,
Still, the wonder is how sorrow,
Thus, the eye, like gladness, charms.
From her topmasts gaily flutter
Portugal's emblazoned arms;
Since their Infante is a captive,
Thus they mourn his slavery—
Thus express the people's sorrow,
Though they come to set him free.
*Fern.* No, my friend, Don Juan, no;
This is not their cause of mourning,
If they came to set me free,
On the faith of my returning,
Joyful would their signals be.

*Enter* DON ENRIQUE *dressed in mourning, and holding an open paper in his hand*

*Enr.* [*to the* KING]. Let me, mighty lord, embrace thee!
*King.* May your Highness' years endure;
*Fern.* [*to* DON JUAN]. Ah! my death is sure, Don Juan.
*King* [*to* MULÉY]. Ah! Muléy, my joy is sure!
*Enr.* Now that of your royal welfare,
I, your presence may believe;
Thou wilt, to embrace my brother,
Mighty monarch, give me leave.
Ah! Fernando!
*They embrace.*
*Fern.* My Enrique,
Ah! what garb is this?—but stay,
Fully have your eyes informed me,
Nothing need your tongue now say;
Do not weep: if 'tis to tell me

Ever must my slavery be—
This is what my soul desireth;
Thanks you should have asked from me,
And in place of grief and mourning
Worn a gala festal suit.
How is my lord, the King? If well,
Nothing can I dread:—thou'rt mute!

*Enr.* Since our sorrows, when repeated,
Doubly touch affliction's chord,
I desire that you should feel them
Only once. Attend, great lord,
[*To the* King.]
For, although a rustic palace
This wild rugged mountain be,
Still, I ask you give *me* audience,
To this captive liberty,
And attention to my tidings.
Torn, and tempest-tossed, the fleet,
Which, with empty pride, so lately
Trod the waves beneath its feet,
Leaving here in Africa—
Thine and his own thoughts the prey—
The Infante's person taken,
Back to Lisbon took its way.
From the moment that King Edward
Heard the tragic news he pined,
For his heart was covered over
With a sadness, and his mind
Passing from the melancholy
Which oppressed it first, gave way
To a lethargy, and dying,
Gave the lie to those who say
Human sorrows are not mortal—
(Ah! how vainly this is said!)
For our brother, Don Fernando,
For the King himself is dead!

*Fern.* Woe is me! how dear hath proved
My detention!

*King.* This misfortune,
Allah knows, my heart hath moved.
Continue:—

*Enr.* In his will when dying,
Thus, my lord, the King did say:—
That for the Infante's person
Ceuta should be given straightway;
Thus it is, that with full powers
From Alphonso I have run
(He the rising star of morning
That supplies the absent sun)
Hither, to yield up that city;
And since . . . . . .

*Fern.* Ah! do not proceed;
Cease, Enrique, for such language
Is unworthy, not indeed
Of a Portuguese Infante,
Of a knight that doth profess
Christ's religion, but of even
The most vile, whose barbarousness
Never was illuminated
By Christ's everlasting laws.
If my brother, now in heaven,
In his will did leave this clause,
It was not that you should read it
Strictly, but he meant thereby,
That he so desired my freedom:
All proper methods you should try,
Whether peaceable or warlike,
To obtain my liberty;
For, to say, "Surrender, Ceuta,"
Is to say, to set him free
Prodigies should be effected.
Can it be? Oh! can it be,
That a just and Catholic monarch
Could surrender to a Moor
A fair city which did cost him
Even his own blood to secure;
When, with sword and buckler only,
On its ramparts he was first
To unfurl our country's standard?
And even this is not the worst:
But a city that confesses
The true Catholic faith in God,
Which has raised so many churches,
Consecrated to his laud,
With affection and devotion;—
Would it like a Catholic be?
Were it zeal for our religion?
Were it Christian piety,
Or a Portuguese achievement,
That these sovereign temples, which
Are the Atlases[1] of Heaven,
All their golden glories rich,
Where the sun of grace is shining,
Should give place to Moorish shades,
And that their opposing crescents,[2]
Through the churches' long arcades,
Thus should make these sad eclipses?
Is it right the sacred walls
Of their chapels become stables,
And their holy altars stalls?
Or if this should not so happen,
Turn to mosques! My cheek grows pale;
Here my tongue grows mute with horror,

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[1] Atlases: the Titan Atlas supported the heavens on his shoulders.

[2] crescent: the crescent is the emblem of Mohammedanism.

Here my frightened breath doth fail,
Here the anguish overwhelms me;
For the thought doth through me send
Such a thrill, my heart is cloven,
And my hair doth stand on end,
And my body trembles over,
For it was not the first time
Stalls and stables gave a lodging
Unto God. But oh! the crime
Of becoming mosques! It seemeth
Like an epitaph—a wide
Mark of infamy undying—
Saying, Here did God abide,
And the Christians now deny it,
Giving it a gift instead
To the demon! Scarcely ever
(As is ordinarily said)
Does a man offend another
In his own house. Can it be,
Crime should enter thus God's mansion,
To offend him there; and we—
We ourselves become his escort—
We admit his impious rout—
And, to let the demon enter,
Driving the Almighty out?
And the Catholics, there dwelling
With their goods and families,
Must prevaricate henceforward
With the faith, or peril these.
Were it proper to occasion
This contingency of sin
By our conduct? And the tender
Little ones that dwell therein,—
Were it right, these helpless Christians,
From the Moors, through our neglect
Should adopt their rites and customs,
And grow up as of their sect
In a miserable thraldom?
Is it right, one life should cost
Many lives? and *that* one being
Of no import if 'twere lost?
Who am I? Am I then greater
Than a man? for if to be
An Infante makes distinction,
I'm a slave. Nobility
Cannot be a slave's adornment.
I am one; then wrong is he
Who doth call me an Infante.
And, if so, who gives advice,
That the poor life of a captive
Should be bought at such a price?
Death is but the loss of being,—
I lost mine amid the fight;
That being gone, my life departed,—
Being dead, it is not right
That so many lives should perish
For the ransom of a corse!
So, these vain and idle powers,
Thus I tear without remorse.
[*Tears the paper.*]
Let them be the sunbeam's atoms,
Or the sparkles of the fire,—
No, 'tis best that I devour them,
For my soul doth not desire
That there should survive a letter
Which would tell the world, the brave
Lusitanian[1] spirit ever
Thought of this. I am thy slave,
And, O King, dispose and order
Of my freedom as you please,
For I would, nor could accept it
On unworthy terms like these:
Thou, Enrique, home returning
Say, in Africa I lie
Buried, for my life I'll fashion
As if I did truly die:—
Christians, dead is Don Fernando;
Moors, a slave to you remains;
Captives, you have a companion,
Who to-day doth share your pains:
Heaven, a man restores your churches
Back to holy calm and peace;
Sea, a wretch remains, with weeping
All your billows to increase;
Mountains, on ye dwells a mourner
Like the wild beasts soon to grow;
Wind, a poor man with his sighing
Doubleth all that thou canst blow;
Earth, a corse within they entrails
Comes to-day to lay his bones.
For King, Brother, Moors and Christians,
Sun, and moon, and starry zones,
Wind and sea, and earth and heaven,
Wild beasts, hills—let this convince
All of ye, in pains and sorrows,
How to-day a constant Prince
Loves the Catholic faith to honour,
And the law of God to hold.
If there were no other reason,
But that Ceuta doth enfold
A divine church consecrated
To the eternal reverence
Of the Conception of our Lady,
Queen of heaven and earth's events,
I would lose, so she be honoured,
Myriad lives in her defence.

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[1] Lusitanian: The Latin name for Portugal was Lusitania.

*King.* Thankless, thoughtless, both of us,
And of the great pride and glory
Of our kingdom; Is it thus
You deprive me, you deny me
What my heart desires so much?
But if in my realms you govern
More than in your own, can such
Servitude aught else conduct to?
But that I may now engrave
On your mind, you are my captive
I will treat you as my slave,—
That your friends here, that your brother,
To their eyes may give belief,
That you kiss my feet as vassal.
FERNANDO *kneels at the King's feet.*
*Enr.* What misfortune!—
*Mul.* [*aside*]. Oh! what grief!
*Enr.* What calamity!
*Juan.* What anguish!
*King.* Now thou art my slave.
*Fern.* 'Tis true,
Small in this, though, is your vengeance,
For as if all mankind do,
Man one day doth leave earth's bosom,
'Tis but to return to her
At the end of various journeys;
But to thank you, I prefer
To reproachings. Since you teach me,
Even in this way, how best
By the shortest road to reach to
My eternal wished-for rest.
*King.* Being now a slave, you cannot
Titles hold, or rents possess;
Ceuta now is in thy power,
If, as slave, thou dost confess
That as master I am thine,
Why not, therefore, give me Ceuta?
*Fern.* Because 'tis God's, and is not mine.
*King.* Is it not a well-known precept,
That a slave in all things must
Be obedient to his master?
Be so now.
*Fern.* In all things just,
Heaven, no doubt, commands obedience,
And no slave should fail therein;
But, if it should chance, the master
Should command the slave to sin,
Then there is no obligation
To obey him: he who sins
When commanded, no less sinneth.
*King.* Thou must die.
*Fern.* Then life begins.
*King.* That this blessing may not happen,
Rather dying live: thou'lt see
I can be cruel.
*Fern.* And I patient.
*King.* Thou'lt never gain thy liberty.
*Fern.* Thou'lt never be the lord of Ceuta.
*King.* Ho! there.

*Enter* SELIM

*Selim.* My lord?
*King.* Immediately
Let this captive here be treated
Like the others: let him be
Laden neck and feet with fetters;
Let him tend my horses' stall,
And the baths and gardens; so that
He be humbled as are all;
Let him wear no silken dresses,
But poor lowly serge instead;
Let him eat black bread, and swallow
Brackish water; let his bed
Be in dark and humid dungeons,
And to all who on him wait,
Let this sentence be extended:—
Hence remove them!
*Enr.* What a fate!
*Mul.* [*aside*]. How unmerited!
*Juan.* What sorrow!
*King.* Now I'll see, 'twixt thee and me,
Barbarian, if thy patience lasteth
Like my wrath.
*Fern.* Yes, thou shalt see,
For with me it is eternal.
[*He is led out*
*King.* Enrique, as my hand is given,
I permit thee to withdraw,
And to Lisbon, back returning,
Leave the sea of Africa;
Say at home, that their Infante,
Their Grand Master, dwells with me,
Occupied about my horses,
Let them come to set him free.
*Enr.* They will do so. If I leave him
In this wretched misery,
And my heart bleeds, that I cannot
In it his companion be,
'Tis because I hope the sooner,
Coming in an army's van,
To return to give him freedom.

*King.* Well, thou'lt do so, if you can.
*Mul.* [*aside*]. Now has come a fit occasion
All my gratitude to show,
Life I owe unto Fernando,
And I'll pay the debt I owe.
[*Exeunt*

## Scene II

### *The King's Garden*

*Enter* Selim, *and* Don Fernando *dressed as a slave, and in chains*

*Sel.* The King commands that you assist
In this garden; do thou not resist,
Disobeying what he hath decreed.
[*Exit*
*Fern.* My patience shall his cruelty exceed.

*Enter some Christian Captives; one sings while the others dig in the garden*

*1st Cap.* [*sings*]. To the conquest of Tangiers,
'Gainst the tyrant king of Fez,
The Infante Don Fernando
Did the king, his brother, send.
*Fern.* There's not a moment but my story will
The sorrowing memory of mankind fill!
I am sad and troubled sore.
*2nd Cap.* Captive, why to sorrow thus give o'er?
Do not weep—be cheerful—the Grand Master
Said, he would bring from out of this disaster
Back to his country every captive here.
*Fern.* [*aside*]. How soon this cheering hope must disappear!
*2nd Cap.* Console yourself, and trust to fortune's powers,
Assist me now to irrigate these flowers,
Take thou two pails, and water bring this way
From yonder pond.
*Fern.* [*aside*]. I struggle to obey:—
A fitting burden have you bid me bear,
Since it is water that you ask me, which my care
Sowing sorrows, cultivating sighs,
Can fill from out the currents of mine eyes!
[*Exit*
*2nd Cap.* To the prison quarters they are leading
Other captives.

*Enter* Don Juan *and other Captives*

*Juan.* Let us look with careful heeding,
If these shady gardens screen him,
Or, perchance, these captives may have seen him,
For when in his company,
Less our sorrow and our grief will be,
And more our consolation:
Tell me, friend, and may heaven compensation
Grant you for it! Have you seen his grace
Fernando, the Grand Master, working in this place?
*2nd Cap.* No, friend, him I have not seen.
*Juan.* Scarcely can I, my tears and sorrow screen.
*3rd Cap.* I repeat, they ope our prison bounds,
And lead new captives to these garden grounds.

*Enter* Don Fernando *carrying two pails of water*

*Fern.* [*aside*]. Mortals, do not wonder at surveying
A grand master of Avis, an Infante, playing
Such an ignoble part; for Time
Oft acts these tragic scenes upon his stage sublime.
*Juan.* It is my lord!—but oh! 'tis past belief
I see your Highness in this state: with grief,
Within my breast, my heart doth burst in twain!
*Fern.* May God forgive you, for the unconscious pain,
Don Juan, you have caused in thus revealing
Who I am. I hoped, my rank concealing,
Among my countrymen to live unknown,
And make their wretched poverty my own.
*1st Cap.* My lord, for pardon I most humbly sue,
Being but now so rude and blind to you.

*3rd Cap.* Let me embrace your feet, my lord.
*Fern.* My friend,
Arise: these ceremonies now must end.
*Juan.* Your Highness . . .
*Fern.* Highness! how can one be so,
Condemned to lead a life so meanly low?
See that an humbler name I crave,
For I will live among you as a slave,
Only as an equal and a friend
I must be treated.
*Juan.* Why does Heaven not send
Its dreadful bolt to crush me with the slain?
*Fern.* A man of noble soul should ne'er complain
Of fate, Don Juan: who distrusts in heaven?
Now an example should by us be given
Of prudence, valour, fortitude, my friend.

*Enter* Zara *with a basket*

*Zara.* The lady Phenix hither doth descend,
And commands, with flowers of various shade,
A garland for this basket should be made.
*Fern.* I hope to bring them to her, presently;
First in this pleasing service let me be.
*1st Cap.* Let us, at least, assist you as you cull.
*Zara.* Here I await you, while the flowers you pull.
*Fern.* Pay me no idle courtesy,
Henceforth your pains and mine must equal be.
And if our sight to-day a difference strike,
Death comes to-morrow and makes all things like.
It were not wisdom, then, but cause of sorrow
Not to do now what must be done to-morrow.
[*Exeunt the* Infante *and the Captives, they following him respectfully*

*Enter* Phenix *and* Rosa

*Phe.* Have you ordered they should choose me
Some fresh flowers?
*Zara.* I so have ordered.
*Phe.* In my troubled and disordered
State, their colours may amuse me.
*Rosa.* Lady, I in wonder lose me,
Seeing fantasies continue
Thus to melancholy win you.
*Zara.* What controls thee thus, what law?
*Phe.* Ah, it was no dream I saw
When I lay with frozen sinew,
But my own impending woe.
When a wretch doth dream with pleasure
That he owns some wished-for treasure,
Zara, I avow and know
That his bliss is only seeming;
But if he continues dreaming
That his fortune hath forsaken,
And that ruin hath o'ertaken,
Though both good and evil wind
Through his dreams, the wretch doth find
But the last when he doth waken!
Thus will be my fate; ah! me,
Pitiless, without remorse.
*Zara.* What remaineth for a corse,
If now you mourn thus piteously?
*Phe.* Ah! 'tis the fate reserved for me.
The guerdon of a corse!—what eye
Ever saw such misery?
Naught remains to me but sighs;
Must I be a corse's prize?
Who will be that corse then?—

*Enter* Fernando *with the flowers*

*Fern.* I!
*Phe.* Who is this, O heavens! I view?
*Fern.* What disturbs thee?
*Phe.* Hearing, seeing
Such a wretched state of being?
*Fern.* I can well believe that true:
Wishing, lady, upon you
To attend in humble duty,
I have brought thee flowers, whose beauty
Typifies my fate, Señora;
They are born with Aurora,
And they perish ere the dew.
*Phe.* When this *marvel*[1] came to light
It was given a fitting name.
*Fern.* Is not every flower the same
That I bear thee in this plight?

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[1] marvel: the four o'clock.

*Phe.* It is true, but say whose spite
Caused this novelty?
*Fern.* My fate.
*Phe.* Is it then so strong?
*Fern.* So great.
*Phe.* You afflict me.
*Fern.* Do not grieve.
*Phe.* Why?
*Fern.* Because a man doth live
Death and fortune's abject mate.
*Phe.* Are you not Fernando?
*Fern.* Yes.
*Phe.* Changed by what?
*Fern.* The laws that wring
Captive souls.
*Phe.* By whom?
*Fern.* The King.
*Phe.* Why?
*Fern.* My life he doth possess.
*Phe.* To-day I saw him thee caress.
*Fern.* And yet he doth abhor me now.
*Phe.* How can it be that he and thou
So late conjoined, twin stars of light,
But one short day could disunite?
*Fern.* These flowers have come to tell thee how.—
These flowers awoke in beauty and delight,
At early dawn, when stars began to set—
At eve they leave us but a fond regret,—
Locked in the cold embraces of the night.
These shades that shame the rainbow's arch of light,
Where gold and snow in purple pomp are met,
All give a warning, man should not forget,
When one brief day can darken things so bright.
'Tis but to wither that the roses bloom—
'Tis to grow old they bear their beauteous flowers,
One crimson bud their cradle and their tomb.
Such are man's fortunes in this world of ours;
They live, they die, one day doth end their doom.
For ages past but seem to us like hours!
*Phe.* Horror, terror, make me fear thee;
I nor wish to see nor hear thee.
Be thou then the first of those
Whose woe hath scared another's woes.
*Fern.* And the flowers?
*Phe.* If they can bear thee
Emblems of mortality,
Let them broken, scattered be;—
They must know my wrath alone.
*Fern.* For what fault must they atone?
*Phe.* Like to stars they seem to me.
*Fern.* Then you do not wish them?
*Phe.* No;
All their rosy light I scorn.
*Fern.* Why?
*Phe.* A woman is, when born,
Subject to life's common foe,
And to fortune's overthrow,
Which methought this star did figure.
*Fern.* Are the stars like flowers?
*Phe.* 'Tis so.
*Fern.* This I do not see, although
I myself have wept their rigour.
*Phe.* Listen.
*Fern.* Speak, I wish to know.
*Phe.* These points of light, these sparkles of pure fire,
Their twinkling splendours boldly torn away
From the reluctant sun's departing ray,
Live when the beams in mournful gloom retire.
These are the flowers of night that glad Heaven's choir,
And o'er the vault their transient odours play.
For if the life of flowers is but one day,
In one short night the brightest stars expire.
But still we ask the fortunes of our lives,
Even from this flattering spring-tide of the skies,
'Tis good or ill, as sun or star survives.
Oh! what duration is there? who relies
Upon a star? or hope from it derives,
That every night is born again and dies?
[*Exit*

*Enter* MULÉY

*Mul.* Until Phenix had departed,
Here I hid me from her sight,
For the most adoring eagle
Flieth sometimes from the light;
Are we now alone?
*Fern.* Yes.
*Mul.* Hear me!

*Fern.* Brave Muléy, what is thy will?
*Mul.* That you know—that faith and honour
Warm a Moorish bosom still.
I know not how first to speak of,
How to think of, such a crime!—
How to tell the pain I've suffered
For this fickle frown of Time!
For this ruin, this injustice!
This dark boon that Fortune grants,
This, the world's most sad example,—
This inconstancy of chance!
But I run some risk if people
See me speaking here to thee,
For, without respect to treat you
Is the king's proclaimed decree;
And thus, leaving to my sorrow
What my voice would fain repeat,
Let it tell, I come to throw me,
As thy slave, before thy feet.
I am thine, and thus, Infante,
I come here, but not to show
Favour to a fallen foeman,
But to pay the debt I owe!
The existence you have given me
I return thee, for indeed
A good action is a treasure
Guarded for the doer's need:
And since here I stand foot-fastened
By the unseen chains of fear—
And above my neck and bosom
Knife and cord hang threatening near—
I desire, in briefest language,
To inform you in one word,
That to-night I will have ready
By the shore, a vessel moored,
Full equipped; and in the loop-holes
Of the cells, I shall prepare
Instruments, which will unfasten
Those unworthy chains you wear.
On the outside of your dungeons
I myself the locks will break;
So that you and all the captives
Prisoned now in Fez, may take
Your departure for your country;
And be certain, that I stay
Here in Fez secure from danger;
Since I easily can say
That they overpowered their masters,
And escaped amid the strife.
Thus we two will put in safety
I my honour, you your life;
Though 'tis certain—if it reacheth
The King's ear, I let thee fly—
He will treat me as a traitor;
But I shall not grieve to die:
And as money may be needful
To conciliate the will
Of those near you, see these jewels,
Golden treasures amply fill
Their minute, but rich proportions;
This, Fernando, is the way
That I give to thee my ransom,
Thus my obligation pay.
For a true and noble captive
Ne'er should rest, until he bring
Payment back for such a favour.
*Fern.* I would wish indeed to thank you
For my freedom; but the King
Cometh to the garden.
*Mul.* Has he
Seen you with me?
*Fern.* No.
*Mul.* If seen,
'Twere suspicious.
*Fern.* Of these branches
I will make a rustic screen,
Which will hide me while he passes.
*Conceals himself.*

*Enter the* King

*King* [*aside*]. Ah! in secret stand Muléy
And Fernando! why in seeing
Me, does one thus go away,
And the other thus dissemble?
There is some concealment here,
Be it certain or not certain,
I must be secure from fear
Of all treason. [*Aloud.*] I am happy—
*Mul.* Lord, I greet thee on my knee.
*King.* Here to find thee!
*Mul.* Speak thy orders.
*King.* Much it grieves me, not to see Ceuta mine.
*Mul.* Then to its conquest,
Crowned with wreaths of laurel, wend;
For their swords against thy valour
Badly can its walls defend.
*King.* By a more domestic warfare
I expect to gain my end.
*Mul.* In what manner?
*King.* In this manner,
I, Fernando's pride must bend,
Giving him such rigid treatment
That he must, or swiftly die,
Or to me surrender Ceuta;

Know then, friend Muléy, that I
Have some cause to fear the person
Of the Grand Master not secure,
Now in Fez. The captives, seeing
Him dishonoured thus, and poor,
Will, I do not doubt, soon murmur,
And break out in mutiny:
Were this not so, it is certain
Powerful interest has he;
And the strongest cells will open
Ever to a golden key.
*Mul.* [*aside*]. I desire now to confirm him
In the thought that this can be,
That he may have no suspicion
Of myself. [*Aloud.*] It seems to me
You are right—they mean to free him.
*King.* There remains one remedy,
That my power may not be outraged.
*Mul.* And it is, my lord?
*King.* To thee—
To thy charge, Muléy, to trust him—
To thy care and custody—
Let not fear nor interest move thee,
Keep him safe in field and cell:—
Thou art the Infante's guardian,
Look to it, thou guard him well,
In what circumstance soever
You must be accountable. [*Exit*
*Mul.* Without any doubt, our concert
By the King was overheard:
Bless me, Allah!

*Enter* Fernando

*Fern.* What afflicts thee?
*Mul.* Have you heard him?
*Fern.* Every word.
*Mul.* Then why is it that you ask me
What afflicts me? Suffering
In a blind and dark confusion,
And, between my friend and king,
Seeing friendship thus and honour
With each other combating;
If to thee I should be loyal,
I to him must traitor be;
If to him continue faithful,
Fail in gratitude to thee.
What then can I do? O heavens!
At the very time I came
To restore you to your freedom
He my confidence should claim,
Thus the better to secure thee.
What, I ask? And if the key
Of our secret is discovered
By the King himself! From thee
Do I ask advice and counsel,
Tell me what I ought to do?
*Fern.* Brave Muléy, both love and friendship
Are inferior to those two—
Loyalty and upright honour.
No one equals to a king,
He alone himself doth equal;
This then is my counselling:
Heed not me, but serve *him* truly,
And that you may disregard
Any fears about your honour,
I myself will be its guard.
Should another come to offer
Freedom, I do promise thee
Not to take it—that your honour
Rest inviolate with me.
*Mul.* Do not counsel me, Fernando,
As loyally, as courteously;
To you, I know, my life is owing,
And that to pay you is but right.
And so, the plan that I projected,
I will prepare against the night;
Be thou free, my life remaineth
Here to suffer in the stead
Of thy death: secure thy freedom,
After that I nothing dread.
*Fern.* Were it just that I should be
So tyrannic, and so cruel
With the man that pities me?
And destroy his stainless honour,
Who to me is giving life?
No: and thus I wish to make you
Umpire of my cause and life.
Do thou give me counsel also;
Ought I take my liberty
From a man who stays to suffer
In my place? and let him be
Cruel to his dearest honour?
What do you advise?
*Mul.* I know not
Which to say, or yea or nay;
If the latter, it will grieve me
That I e'er that word could say;
If the former—there is something
In my bosom that doth tell,
That in saying "yes" unto thee,
I do not advise thee well.
*Fern.* So advise; my God obeying,
And what his religion says,
I a constant Prince will show me
Here in servitude in Fez.

## ACT III

### Scene I

*A Hall in the Country Palace of the King of Fez*

*Enter* Muléy *and the* King

*Mul.* [*aside*]. Since all aid is unavailing,
From the lines the king doth draw
Round Fernando: the detailing
Of his sufferings may:—the law
Of true friendships is unfailing. [*Aloud.*]
If, my lord, I thee have served,
On land or sea, in any way,—
If my heart hath never swerved
From the allegiance it should pay,
If a boon I have deserved,
Be it thy attention.
*King.* Say.
*Mul.* Don Fernando—
*King.* Say no more.
*Mul.* Wilt thou not hear me then, before
You thus refuse me?
*King.* No, that word
Offends too much.
*Mul.* And why, my lord?
*King.* Because, now every chance is o'er
Of doing what thou wouldst require,
If 'tis for him that thou shouldst ask.
*Mul.* My lord, and dost thou not desire
To know how I discharge the task
Thyself hath given?
*King.* Well, speak; mine ire
Shall ne'er be seen in pity's mask.
*Mul.* Fernando, whose unhappy fate
Survives his glory, once so great,
Still lives, but in such abject thrall,
That him the wondering world doth call
A miracle of adverse fate,
Feeling the wrath—a better word
Perhaps would be the boundless power—
Of thy imperial crown, my lord,
And victim of his pride—this hour
Doth feel a misery so abhorred,
That he in such a place doth lie
So lonely and so vile, that I
Will not offend your ears to name;
And there, infirm, and poor, and lame,
He asketh alms from passers by;
For as your orders were that he
Should sleep but in a dungeon's murk,
And on your steeds attendant be,
And in the prison quarters work;
And none should give him food, we see
Him so reduced from what he has been,
His pallid cheek so worn and wan;
His tottering limbs, that make him lean
Upon a staff; all changed or gone
His princely air, his royal mien;
Passing the chilly night away
In stony cells, as he begun,
Still firm in his resolve. When play,
At length, the pure beams of the sun,
Who is the father of the day,
His fellow-slaves (how grieved thereat!)
Upon a miserable mat,
Lifting him, place him, worn and weak,
Upon (since I the name must speak)
A dung-heap! for neglect begat
A state so loathsome, none will let
Him near their homes; and so he lies,
A sight no eye can e'er forget.
Shuddering, the gazer from him flies,
Nor feels compassion, nor regret.
Nor word nor aid to him doth send;
One servant, and one faithful friend,
A cavalier, alone remain
To solace him amid his pain,
And both divide, as they attend,
With him their scant supply of food,
Too small for one, to do one good,
For scarcely have the lips possess'd
The morsel, but it seeks the breast,
The mouth not tasting as it should;
And even your people punish these,
Because, by pity moved, they wait
To give their master some slight ease,
To them, no punishment so great,
As that your servants, should they please,
May rudely tear them each from each:
While one doth leave him, to beseech
Some food, the other doth remain
To give him solace in his pain
By kindly act, or soothing speech:
Conclude a suffering so severe,
And draw the Prince, so please your Grace,
From his sad state and dungeon drear,
Let horror move you in the place
Of pity's pang, or sorrow's tear.
*King.* 'Tis well, Muléy.

*Enter* Phenix

*Phe.* My lord, if ever
I have, by dutiful endeavour,
Deserved in aught to gain from thee
A boon, I come, your Majesty,
This day to ask of you a favour.
*King.* What could I then deny to thee?
*Phe.* The Prince Fernando. . . . .
*King.* Oh! 'tis well,—
Of this, no further speak to me!
*Phe.* No human tongue has power to tell
The horror of his state. From thee
It was my only wish to pray. . . . .
*King.* Oh! Phenix, cease, be silent, stay,
Who is it that Fernando then
Thus makes an outcast among men?
Thus slowly killeth day by day?
If he, for being madly brave,
And obstinate in a wild resolve,
Thus pines away, a lonely slave,
And sees the tardy days revolve—
'Twas he himself the sentence gave,
Not I who doomed him to this woe;
Is it not in his power to go
From out this misery and live?
A word can do it. Let him give
Up Ceuta to my hands, and so
Thus end those rigours and those pains.

*Enter* Selim

*Sel.* My lord, before the palace doors,
Crave audience, two ambassadors,
One from Morocco's neighbouring plains,
And one from Alphonso—he who reigns
O'er Portugal.
*Phe.* [*aside*]. Still greater pains!
Doubtless he comes to lead the way
To Tarudante.
*Mul.* [*aside*]. Heavens! from me
Now hope withdraws its cheering ray;
By friendship and by jealousy,
I have lost all things in one day!

*Enter* Alphonso *and* Tarudante *from opposite sides*

*Tarudante.* Most illustrious King of Fez. . . .
*Alphonso.* King of Fez so proud and mighty. . . .
*Tar.* May thy glory. . . .
*Alph.* Thy existence. . . .
*Tar.* Never die. . . .
*Alph.* Be ever gloriant. . . .
*Tar.* [*to* Phenix]. And thou, this sun's serene Aurora. . . .
*Alph.* Thou its setting's hopeful Orient. . . .
*Tar.* Spite of years, may you continue. . . .
*Alph.* Spite of time, may you be reigning. . . .
*Tar.* To be gladdened. . . .
*Alph.* To be honoured. . . .
*Tar.* Tasting pleasures. . . .
*Alph.* Laurels gaining. . . .
*Tar.* Great enjoyments. . . .
*Alph.* Mighty triumphs. . .
*Tar.* Little evil. . . .
*Alph.* Good unsparing. . . .
*Tar.* While I speak, say, Christian, why
Thus to speak, art thou so daring?
*Alph.* Because whenever I am by,
I speak first, my wish declaring.
*Tar.* To me, as of the Moorish nation,
The foremost place is surely own;
When kindred races meet, to strangers
A preference should ne'er be shown.
*Alph.* In lands where courtesy is shown,
Quite a different rule prevaileth;
In every clime, in every zone,
A guest the foremost place receiveth.
*Tar.* However strong may be this reason,
By it I am not overthrown;
Since as a guest I have come hither,
The foremost place is mine alone.
*King.* Enough of this—let both of ye
With equal favour here be seated;
The Portuguese speak first, for he
Should, from his different faith, be treated
With greater honour.
*Tar.* [*aside*]. I am wroth.
*Alph.* Brief will be my simple story:—
Don Alphonso, Portugal's
Famous King, whose deathless glory
Will be told with tongues of bronze,
Spite of death's annihilation,
And of envy: unto thee
Greeting sends and salutation,
And doth ask you, since it seemeth
Don Fernando seeks not freedom,

Since the life that he redeemeth
Should the city of Ceuta cost;
That the fullest value of it
Should be rated at a price
More than avarice could covet
Or the most liberal despise:
Gold and silver he doth proffer
More than two such cities' worth,
For his ransom: and this offer
He doth make in friendly guise,
Which if you refuse, with bolder
Front he'll come to set him free;
For upon the smooth, white shoulder
Yonder of the labouring sea,
Towns arise amid the water
Of a thousand war-ships built,
And he swears with fire and slaughter
Him to free, and thee subdue—
Leaving all these bright plains covered
O'er with crimson blood, so that
What the rising sun discovered
Green-hued emeralds dewy wet,
He will leave behind him lying
Rubies red when he doth set.

*Tar.* Though, as an ambassador,
Mine should not be the replying,
Still in what concerns my King,
Christian, I will dare to venture,
For this insult is to him:
And my lord here will not censure
That his son at such a time
Could not patiently forget him:
So, on his part, you can say
To your King Alphonso, let him
Hither come, but in a space
Shorter than from night till morn,
He will see his veins' warm purple
Soon these verdant hills adorn;
So that even the heavens will think
They must have forgot to form
Any flower except the pink.

*Alph.* If thou wert my equal, Moor,
This dispute were swiftly settled,
And the victory would lie
'Twixt two young men, manly-mettled.
Tell your King, that he come hither,
If renowned he wish to be,
Mine will not delay, believe me.

*Tar.* You almost said that thou wert he,
And if so, I, Tarudante,
Stand prepared to answer thee.

*Alph.* In the field I will await thee.

*Tar.* There, as thou wilt quickly find,
I shall not too long delay thee!
I am lightning!

*Alph.* I the wind!

*Tar.* I am fury!

*Alph.* I am death!

*Tar.* Do you not tremble but to hear me?

*Alph.* Do you not die, but to come near me?

*King.* My lords, will both your Highnesses—
Now that your wrath has torn asunder
The dark disguise of curtained shade,
Which hid each royal planet under—
Will you remember, 'neath this sky,
No battle-field can be selected
Without my leave: which I deny;
That time be mine, for my projected
Service. . . .

*Alph.* I do not receive
Or hospitality or favour
From one who so has made me grieve;
I seek Fernando, the endeavour
To behold him is the cause
Why, disguised thus, I have ventured
Driven by duty here to Fez,
And before your court I entered
I was told that you did spend
At this pleasure-house a season,
And I hither came to end
My faint hope, or with more reason
To await a certain pain;
Be it known, my lord, I only
For your answer here remain.

*King.* And that answer, King Alphonso,
Shall be very brief and plain;
If you do not give me Ceuta,
Him, for this, thou shalt not bear.

*Alph.* Since for him I have come hither,
And without him go, prepare
For the war I now declare;
And [*to* TARUDANTE.] ambassador, whoe'er
Thou may'st be, amid the fray
We shall soon see one another;
Tremble Africa today.
[*Exit*

*Tar.* Since I cannot have the joy,
Beauteous Phenix, of thy seeing
Me as thy attendant slave,
Let me taste the bliss of being

At thy feet; thy hand present
To him, who his soul doth give thee.
*Phe.* Let your Highness not augment,
Mighty lord, the suit and honour
You have shown me, which I prize,
Knowing what to me is owing.
*Mul.* [*aside*]. What does he expect, whose eyes
See this sight and yet surviveth?
*King.* Since your Highness thus in Fez
Unexpectedly arriveth,
You will pardon us the way
We receive you.
*Tar.* Pressing duty
Will not let me here delay
Longer than a passing moment;
And supposing that I came
As ambassador, with powers
My betrothed wife to claim—
You your full consent had given:
Not being so, yet still for this,
May I hope I shall not forfeit
That quick certainty of bliss?
*King.* In everything, my lord, you conquer,
And so, to set that doubt at rest,
And that all needful preparation
For such a war be made, 'tis best
Your mind be altogether freed from
Cares like these; and so return,
That you may be here the sooner
Joined with me the foe to spurn,
Should they dare to try the passage,—
These threatened hosts of Portugal.
*Tar.* That is but of small importance;
As I came here so I shall
Quick return, conducting with me
Such a host of armed men,
That these desert plains shall look like
Crowded murmuring cities then;
Soon shall I be here, thy soldier.
*King.* Then with speed let all things be
Ordered for the journey. Phenix,
It is right to Fez with me
Thou shouldst come, to glad that city.
Muléy!
*Mul.* My gracious lord!
*King.* Prepare
A chosen escort from the army,
As unto thy special care
Phenix I intrust, till safely
Thou dost leave her with her spouse.
[*Exit*

*Mul.* [*aside*]. This new ill was all I wanted,
Since stern fate no more allows
My poor succour to Fernando,
Let despair entwine his brows,
Now this glimmering hope hath vanished. [*Exeunt*

## Scene II

*A Street in Fez*

Don Juan Coutiño, Brito, *and other Captives, enter, supporting* Don Fernando: *they place him on a mat upon the ground.*

*Fern.* Place me here, where I can view,
With gladdened heart and will subdued,
The cloudless light of heaven's pure blue.
O mighty Lord! so great and good,
To thee what boundless thanks are due!
When Job, as I, in anguish lay,
He curses on the day did pray,
But then it was because of sin
Which he had been engendered in;
But I, far different, bless the day
For all the graces God doth cheer
Our hearts through it—for it is clear
That every beauteous roseate hue,
And every beam that gilds the blue,
But living tongues of fire appear
To praise and bless him without end.
*Brito.* Does then your lordship feel so well?
*Fern.* Better than I deserve, my friend:
O Lord of Heaven! what tongue can tell
The mercies that to me you send?—
When from a dungeon's darksome gleam
Thou lead'st me forth, thou dost impart
To my chill blood the sun's warm beam.
O Lord! how liberal thou art!—
*1st Cap.* Heaven knows, how great a boon we'd deem
The favour of being left with thee;
But the hour warns us, we must be
At work.
*Fern.* My sons, adieu!—
*2nd Cap.* What bitter grief!
*3rd Cap.* What sight to see!
[*Exeunt*

*Fern.* Will you remain with me, ye two?—
*Juan.* I too must also leave you now.
*Fern.* What can I do when thou art gone?—
*Juan.* My lord, I will return anon;
I only go to seek, somehow,
A little food; for since Muléy
From Fez was forced to go away,
On us has fallen a total dearth
Of human help upon the earth;
But I will go without delay
To try and gain it, even although
I make impossible demands;
For all who see me, fear to go
Against the edict, which commands
That even to a drop of water, no
Hand should give, or sell me aught,
Because they know it is for thee;—
To such a state has fortune brought
Our sad condition: but I see
People advancing hither.
[*Exit*
*Fern.* Oh!
Would my voice could move to pity
Any heart in all this city!—
That the brief moments I may live
To greater suffering I may give!—

*Enter the* KING, TARUDANTE, PHENIX, *and* SELIM

*Sel.* By a street, my lord, you've gone,
Where, perforce, you needs must be,
By the Infante, seen and known.
*King* [*to* TARUDANTE]. Thou hast come for this alone,
That my greatness thou mayst see.
*Tar.* Honours still thou showest me.
*Fern.* Give a wretch in charity
Some relief, however scant;
Look, a fellow-man am I,
In affliction and in want,
And with very hunger die.
Men, take pity on a man;
Wild beasts pity one another;
Will not man a suffering brother?
*Brito.* This I think is not the plan
Here of asking—try another.
*Fern.* How?
*Brito.* You should have thus began:—
Let your pity, Moors, be shown
Now unto this poor man's profit,
Let some food to him be thrown;
I ask it by the holiest bone
Of Mahomet, the great Prophet.
*King* [*aside*]. That his constancy received
Naught of change, though thus bereaved,
Offends, insults me more than all.
[*Aloud.*] Infante! Prince!
*Brito.* The king doth call.
*Fern.* On me?—no, Brito, thou'rt deceived,
No Prince, no proud Infante, I,—
But the poor corse of what were they.—
And since almost in earth I lie,
Their names are not my names to-day,
Whate'er they've been in days gone by.
*King.* Since you disown your rank and birth,
Then, as Fernando, answer me.
*Fern.* Now must I raise me from the earth,
And slowly creeping unto thee,
Embrace thy feet.
*King.* Thy constancy
Continues still to vex me so;
Is thy obedience humbleness
Or resolution?
*Fern.* 'Tis to show
What great respect a slave doth owe
Unto his lord, nor more nor less;
And since I am thy slave at present,
And in thy presence now appear,
I will e'en venture to address thee,
My lord and King, and pray thee hear:
King I call thee, though thou beest
Of another law, for so august
Is the divinity of monarchs—
So strong and absolute—it must
Ever pitying minds engender,
And make all noble blood display
Pity and wisdom, as its nature.
For even 'mong brutes and beasts of prey
This name, authority so ample
Does in its wondrous way enforce,
That, by a certain law, obedience
Follows in Nature's usual course;
And thus, within his rude republics,
We read the lion-king doth reign,
Who, when his horrid front he wrinkleth,
And crowns him with his royal mane,
Feels pity, for he ne'er abuseth
Whatever prey his wrath hath slain.
So on the sea's salt foam the dolphin,

Who is the king of fish, we're told,
Worketh upon his azure shoulder,
In scales of silver and of gold,
The shape of crowns; and we behold him,
When the wild tempest shrieks with glee,
Bear on his back the sinking seaman,
Lest he should perish in the sea.
The eagle, too, so proud and noble,
He, with his tuft of plumes upcurled,
Diadem-like, by winds, is king
Of all the birds that from this world
Rise to salute the sun in heaven;
And he, through pity just and brave,
Downwards darts, lest man in drinking,
Should, amid the silver wave,
Drink his death; for o'er the crystal
Oft the snake his poison flings,
Which he scatters by the motion
Of his disturbing beak and wings.
So 'mong plants and precious stones
Is extended and deciphered
This imperial law of thrones.
The pomegranate which o'ershoots,
Crowned with flowers, the topmast branches,
Proof that it is queen of fruits,
Withers all its poisoned berries,
Which, like rubies, glisten through,
Turning them to yellow topaz,
Of a pale and sickly hue.
And the diamond, in whose presence
Even the loadstone turns away
From its beloved north, thus showing
How its true king it doth obey,
Is so noble, that the treason
Of its lord it cannot hide,
And its hardness, which the burin[1]
Finds too flinty to divide,
Of its own accord dissolveth
Into small and shining dust.
If then, among beasts and fishes,
Plants, and stones, and birds, the august
Majesty of King, is pity—
It, my lord, were not unjust
That men's bosoms should possess it—
A different faith does not withdraw
You from this rule; since, to be cruel
Is condemned by every law.
Think not I desire to move thee
By my anguish and my pain,
To the end that life you give me:
This, my voice seeks not to gain;
For I know that I must perish
Of this malady which dims
All my senses, and which, frost-like,
Creepeth o'er my weary limbs;
I know well that I am wounded
By death's hand, for every word
That my feeble breath can utter
Cuts me like a keen-edged sword:
For I know that I am mortal,
Not secure of life one hour,
And 'tis doubtless to exhibit
Life and death's divided power,
That the cradle and the coffin
Are so like each other wrought;
For it is a natural action
When a man receiveth aught,
That his hands he raiseth upward,
Joined together in this way.
But should he express refusal,
By a similar action, may
His intent be known, by simply
Turning them averted down;
So, the world, to prove it seeks us
When we're born, without a frown
In a cradle doth receive us,
Leaving us securely lain
In its open arms: but should it,
Or through fury or disdain,
Wish to drive us forth, it turneth
Back her hands, with the intent,
That the coffin's mute material
Be of that same instrument,
For an upturned open cradle
When reversed, becomes a tomb.
Since we live in such assurance
Of our death—the common doom—
That when we are born, together
We our first and last bed see;
What expects he who this heareth?
Who that knows this, what waits he?
It is certain, that it cannot
Be to live; undoubtedly,
Then, 'tis death, and this I ask thee,
That the heavens may thus comply
With my earnest wish of dying
For the faith. But think not, I
Seek this boon through desperation,
Or from a dislike to live;
No, but from the strongest impulse
That I feel, my life to give
In the defence of my religion,
And to lay before God's feet

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[1] **burin:** the cutting tool of the engraver.

Life and soul breathed out together:
Thus, although I death entreat,
Will this impulse exculpate me.
If, through pity, thou dost slight
This request, let anger move thee.
Art thou a lion? then 'tis right,
That thou roar and tear in pieces
Him who in thy wrathful mood
Injures, wrongeth, and offends thee.
Art thou an eagle? then you should
Wound with vengeful beak and talons
Him who would dare despoil thy nest.
Art thou a dolphin? then be herald
Of storms to move the seaman's breast,
How that the sea this huge world furrows.
Art thou a kingly tree? then show
Through all your bare and naked branches,
How wildly Time's dark tempests blow—
The ministers who work God's vengeance.
Art thou a diamond? then by
Thy own dust make deadliest poison,
Weary thyself out in wrath: but I,
Though I suffer greater torments,
Though I greater rigours see,
Though I weep still greater anguish,
Though I go through more misery,
Though I experience more misfortunes,
Though I more hunger must endure,
Though my poor body have no covering
But these few rags; and this impure
Dungeon be still my only dwelling,
All for the faith my soul derides;
For it is the sun that lights me,
For it is the star that guides!
It is the laurel that doth crown me;
No triumph o'er the Church thou'lt have;
O'er me, if you desire it, triumph:
God will my cause defend and save,
Since it is his for which I struggle.[1]
*King.* Can it be, in such a state,
Thou canst boast thus and console thee?
Being thine own, why idly rate
Me, for condoling not a fate,
When thou thyself wilt not condole thee?
Since then you your life resign
By your own deed, and not by mine,
No pity need'st thou hope from me,
Merciful thou to thyself must be
Ere I can feel those pains of thine. [*Exit*

*Fern.* [*to* Tarudante]. My lord, your gracious Majesty
Be my protector.
*Tar.* What a sight!
*Fern.* [*to* Phenix]. Since beauty owns no lovelier light,
Than when upon her face we see
Enthroned mild mercy's deity,—
Protect me with the king!
*Phe.* What grief!
*Fern.* What! not a look!
*Phe.* 'Tis past belief!
*Fern.* 'Tis well; those beauteous eyes I know
Were never made to look at woe.
*Phe.* My very fear forbids relief!
*Fern.* Since thou wilt not turn thine eye
Towards me, and desire to fly;
Lady, it is well to know,
Though thy beauty prides thee so,
That thou canst do less than I,
And perhaps I more than thou.
*Phe.* Horror comes, I know not how,
Wounding me, when thou dost speak.
Leave me man; what dost thou seek?
More I cannot suffer now! [*Exit*

*Enter* Don Juan *with some bread*

*Juan.* This bread, I bring thee to assuage
Thy patient craving after food,
Have the cruel Moors pursued,—
Striking me with blows through rage.
*Fern.* It is Adam's heritage.
*Juan.* Take it.
*Fern.* Ah! my faithful friend,
'Tis too late; for now doth end
All my woes in death.
*Juan.* O heaven!
Now be thy consolation given.
*Fern.* But since deathwards all men doth wend,
What is there that ends not so?
In the world's confused abyss,
Sickness ever leads to this,
When death strikes the fatal blow.

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[1] "The reply of Fernando," says Sismondi, "is wholly in the Oriental style. It is not by arguments, nor, indeed, by sentiments of compassion, that he attempts to touch his master; but by that exuberance of poetical images which was regarded as real eloquence by the Arabians, and which was, perhaps, more likely to touch a Moorish king than a discourse more appropriate to Nature and circumstances."

Man, be mindful, here below,
Of thy soul's sublimer part;
Think upon eternity,
Wait not till infirmity
Suddenly that truth impart—
For infirmity itself thou art.
On the hard earth, year by year,
Man is treading, hopeful, brave,
But each step is o'er his grave,
Daily drawing near and near.
Mournful sentence—law severe—
But which cannot be mistaken,
Every step (what fears awaken!)
Is to that dark goal commissioned,
So that God is not sufficient
To prevent that step being taken:
Friends, my end approaches nigher;
Bear me from this public place
In your arms.
*Juan.* Life's last embrace
For me, is this.
*Fern.* What I desire,
Noble friend, is, when I expire,
That these garments you unbind:
In my dungeon, you will find
My religious cloak, which I
Bore so oft in days gone by.
Uncovered thus and unconfined
Bury me—his wrath passed by—
If from the fierce King you procure
Leave to give me sepulture.
Mark the spot, for although I
Here to-day a captive die,
Ransomed yet, I hope to share
The blessed altar's sacred prayer,
For, my God! since I have given
So many churches unto Heaven,
One to me 'twill surely spare.
[*They bear him out in their arms*

### SCENE III

*The Sea-Coast*

*Enter* DON ALPHONSO *and Soldiers with arquebuses*

*Alph.* Leave to the fickle field of green—
The azure wave—this arrogant machine
Of ships, whose vastness scaring heaven's beholders,
The sea sustains upon its snow-white shoulders,
And upon this sandy plain
Let the pregnant mountains of the main
Bring forth the troops, their fire-arms brightly gleaming,
Each man-filled boat the Grecian structure[1] seeming.

*Enter* DON ENRIQUE

*Enr.* My Lord, you did not wish upon the strand
Of Fez, that we our armament should land,
And this place, for debarkation,
You did choose—unhappy situation!—
For on one side, by the coast
Marching comes a numerous martial host
Whose speed the wind outvies;
Whose vastness makes the hills increase in size;
And with a similar number, Tarudante
Leadeth his wife away (the fortunate Infante)
From Fez unto Morocco,—
But learn the tidings better from the echo.
*Alph.* Enrique, 'tis for this that I advance
To meet them at this pass; 'tis not through chance
That I, this spot have chosen, but reflection,
And this the reason is, of my selection:—
If I, at Fez had landed on the coast,
I must have fought with their united host,
But being divided thus in two,
With smaller power I can each force subdue;
And so, before they can prepare,
Sound to arms.
*Enr.* My Lord, reflect—take care;
Unseasonable seems this movement.
*Alph.* Oh! mine ire
No tardy-footed counsel doth desire,
Nor doth my vengeance know the way
Even to brook a moment's brief delay;
Let Africa beware,
In my strong hands the scourge of death I bear.
*Enr.* Already hath the night begun,
And see, the shining chariot of the sun
Has ceased the clouds of evening to illume.

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[1] Grecian structure: the wooden horse of Troy.

*Alph.* Well, let us combat in the gloom;
The faith that animates my soul to-day,
Nor any power, nor time, can take away.
Fernando, if the martyrdom you suffer,
Since it is in his own cause, to God you offer,
Certain is the sacred victory,
Mine will be the honour, thine the glory.
*Enr.* Thy daring pride doth lead thee much too far.

*The Ghost of* Don Fernando *speaks within.*

*Fern.* Great Alphonso! to the attack! war! war!
*A trumpet sounds.*
*Alph.* Hear you not these mingled voices breaking
The silence, and the swift, sad night-winds waking?
*Enr.* Yes: and with them too do I hear the rattle
Of arms, and trumpets charging to the battle.
*Alph.* Forward, Enrique! doubts had not delayed you
If you relied on Heaven.

*Enter the Ghost of* Don Fernando, *dressed in his capitulary cloak,*[1] *and with a torch in his hand*

*Fern.* Yes! it will aid you;
For the Heavens regarding
Your faith and zeal, your piety rewarding,
Will this day defend you,
And to free me from my slavery doth send you;
For in return (a rare example)
Of many temples, God doth offer me one temple,
And with this flame-bespangled
Torch, from the streaming orient disentangled,
Before the army gliding,
Thus shall I go, the light your footsteps guiding,
That thy triumphs may be thus propitious,
And equal, great Alphonso, to thy wishes.
To Fez advance, not there new laurels getting,
But that thy morning rise upon my setting. [*Exit*
*Enr.* Alphonso, I still doubt my eyes deceive.
*Alph.* And I do not. I bow and I believe,
And if it be for God's divinest glory,
No more cry "war!" the cry be "victory!" [*Exeunt*

## Scene IV

*Before the Walls of Fez*

*Enter the* King *and* Selim; *on the walls appear* Don Juan *and a Captive; before them is a coffin; in it appears to be the body of* Don Fernando

*Juan.* Now rejoice! rejoice! barbarian,
That thy tyranny hath ta'en
The noblest life of the world!
*King.* Who are you?
*Juan.* A man, who though he should be slain
For it, shall not leave Fernando,
And though madness choke my breath,
Like the faithful dog, I shall not
Leave my master even in death.
*King.* Christians, this is an example
Which, to future times may figure
What was due unto my justice,
For it cannot be called rigour—
That revenge which overtaketh
Wrongs to royal persons done.
Now let Alphonso come and free him,
With arrogant presumption,
From his chains; for though hath faded
The high hopes that once I had
Of Ceuta, *he* will lose the haughty
Hope of freeing him; I'm glad,
In this narrow cell to see him,
For though dead, he shall not be
Free of my renowned resentment:
Thus exposed, in mockery
Let him lie for all beholders.
*Juan.* King, thy punishment is near,
For upon the fields and waters
I can plainly see, from here,
Coming swift my Christian standards.
*King.* Let us mount upon the wall
To investigate these tidings.
[*They go in*

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[1] capitulary cloak: the cloak of the Order of the Knights of Aviz.

*Juan.* Down the drooping banners fall,
And the sullen drums are muffled,
Fires and lights are out, and all,
All things wear the signs of mourning.

*The drums beat a mournful march; enter the Ghost of* DON FERNANDO *bearing a lighted torch, and followed by* DON ALPHONSO *and* DON ENRIQUE *at the head of their troops, with whom as prisoners come* TARUDANTE, PHENIX, *and* MULÉY

*Fern.* Through the darkness of the night,
By wild paths that no man knoweth,
Have I led you; now the sun
Faintly through the grey clouds gloweth.
Thus, victorious, great Alphonso,
I, to Fez have led thy feet.
This is Fez: behold the ramparts.
For my speedy ransom treat.
[*Disappears*

*Alph.* Ho, there! on the walls, to speak
To the King I crave an audience.

*Enter the* KING *and* SELIM *on the walls*

*King.* Valiant youth, what dost thou seek?
*Alph.* That you yield me the Infante—
The Grand Master Don Fernando;
Phenix here and Tarudante,
Prisoners now, will be his ransom:
Thus we shall depart in peace.
Choose now which of these thou pleasest,
Thy daughter's death or his release.
*King* [*to* SELIM]. What can I now do, friend Selim,
In a perplexity so strange?
Fernando's dead, and see, my daughter
Is in their power—how great a change
In the condition of our fortunes,
Since I have fallen to such a state!
*Phe.* How is this, my lord, that seeing
My person hemmed by ills so great,
My life in this extremest peril,
My honour in this dangerous strait;
Can you hesitate to answer?
Can your anxiety delay
Even for a minute or an instant
The words of liberty to say?
In thy hand my life is lying,
And you consent (oh! bitter pain!
That mine (oh! grief beyond expression!)
Should thus unjustly wear this chain!
On thy voice my life is hanging,
And (cruelty beyond compare!)
Thou permittest mine to trouble
Vainly thus the realms of air!
With thine eyes, you see my bosom
Thus the aim of pointed spears,
And you consent, that mine should sadly
Weep those useless tender tears!
Once my King, but now a wild beast,
Once my sire—an adder now—
Once my judge, but now my headsman,
Nor king, nor judge, nor father thou!
*King.* Phenix, if I have not given thee.
Answer sooner—as 'tis known
Unto Heaven—'tis not to deny thee
Life, when thine would cost mine own,
And since now, both one and the other
Can no longer here delay,
Know, Alphonso, that when Phenix
Yester evening took her way
Out of Fez, two glorious planets
Down in two seas—one dark and dun—
The sea of death; one bright with sea-foam,—
Sank the Infante and the Sun.
Within this poor and narrow coffin
His lifeless body lieth lone;
Give death unto the beauteous Phenix,
And let my blood for his atone!
*Phe.* Ah! woe is me! from this sad moment
For me, now every hope is o'er!
*King.* No remedy for me remaineth
By which to live one instant more!
*Enr.* God of mercy! what sad tidings!
Ah! ye Heavens, we have delayed
Far too long to give him freedom!
*Alph.* Do not say so, if the shade
Of Fernando said, thus darkly—
Free me from this slavery,—
It was for his corse he said it,
That, for many temples, he
Might obtain one for his body,
And for this be ransoméd;
King of Fez, do not imagine
That Fernando, even dead,
Is not worth this living beauty;
For him, though thus dead he lieth,
I exchange her: then, I pray,
Send us snow for these bright crystals—
January for this May,—
Roses dead for living diamonds,
And a hapless corse in fine
For a goddess-seeming image.

*King.* How! what mean these words of thine,
Brave, invincible Alphonso?
*Alph.* Him, permit these slaves to lower.
*Phe.* Thus I am a corse's ransom!
Now Heaven's prophecy is o'er.
*King.* Carefully let down the coffin
By the wall, with all things meet.
I myself, to make delivery,
Go to throw me at thy feet.
[*Exit*

*The coffin is let down by cords from the walls.*

*Alph.* Let me in my arms receive thee,
Martyred prince—divinely grand.
*Enr.* Accept my reverence—sainted brother.

*Enter the* King, Don Juan, *and Captives*

*Juan.* Let me kiss thy victor hand,
Brave Alphonso.
*Alph.* Ah! Don Juan.
Ah! my friend, a piteous tale,
Have I learned of the Infante.
*Juan.* Till his death, I did not fail
In my attendance; till I saw him
Free beneath his native skies,
Dead or living, to be with him
I had vowed—see, there he lies.
*Alph.* I must clasp thy hand, my uncle,
For although, through luckless fate,
I, to draw thee from this danger,
Came, illustrious lord, too late,
Yet in death, which is the greatest,
Can true friendship be displayed;
In a sacred sovereign temple,
The grave deposit shall be made
Of thy consecrated body.
I deliver, king, to thee,
Tarudante and fair Phenix,
And I ask of you, that she
With Muléy be let to marry,—
For the friendship that I know
He did bear to the Infante.
Come, now, captives, let us go;
Look upon your prince, and bear him
On your shoulders to the fleet.
*King.* It is right they all go with him.
*Alph.* To the solemn sound and sweet
Of trumpets, and the drum's low music
Let the army all attend,
Marching in the usual order
Of interment; and so end,
Humbly asking you to pardon
The great errors that it hath—
The Lusitanian[1] Prince Fernando
Firm and Constant in the Faith.
[*Exeunt*

## READING LIST

*The Star of Seville* (*La Estrella de Sevilla*), Lope de Vega
*The King the Greatest Alcalde* (*El Mejor Alcalde el Rey*), Lope de Vega
*The Devotion of the Cross* (*La Devoción de la Cruz*), Calderón
*Life Is a Dream* (*La Vida es Sueño*), Calderón
*Beware of Smooth Water* (*Guardate del Agua Mansa*), Calderón
*The Mighty Magician* (*El Magico Prodigoso*), Calderón
*The New Art of Writing Plays in This Age* (*Arte nuevo de hacer comedias en este tiempo*), Lope de Vega
*The Spanish Drama,* Chapters I and IV, George H. Lewes

## TOPICS

Humanism of the Renaissance
Dramatic Critics of the Renaissance
The *Sofonisba* of Trissino (Tragedy)
The *Aminta* of Tasso (Pastoral Drama)
The Beginnings of the Opera in Italy
Realistic Comedy in Machiavelli's *Mandragora*
The Commedia dell' Arte
The Stock Characters in Pantomine
Stock Characters on the American Vaudeville Stage
Stock Characters in the Movies
Life of Lope de Vega
Life of Calderón
The Plays of Tirso de Molina
The Golden Age of Spanish History
The Dress of the Sixteenth Century in Spain as Revealed in the Paintings of Velasquez
The Satire on Spanish Romanticism in Cervantes' *Don Quixote*

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[1] Lusitanian: Portuguese.

# THE RENAISSANCE—ENGLAND

England felt the full enthusiasm of the New Learning just at the time when the whole nation was swept with patriotic exultation over the defeat of the Spanish Armada. In the long years of religious and civil peace during the reign of Queen Elizabeth, literature flourished as never before in England's history. The form which best expressed the active, fervid spirit of the people was the drama.

At about the same time that John Heywood was writing interludes, the universities began to study the rediscovered literature of Greece and Rome. Classic plays were acted in Greek or Latin, and imitations were written in English. Comedy preceded tragedy in England; perhaps because it was easier to act, perhaps because it made a wider appeal to the unlearned whose liking for farce had already been fostered by the invented comic scenes in the religious miracle plays. The first comedy in English was a translation and adaptation of the *Miles Gloriosus* of Plautus under the title of *Ralph Royster Doyster*. It was written between 1550–1552 by the headmaster of Eton, **Nicholas Udall,** and was presumably acted by his pupils. The first entirely original English comedy, however, is *Gammer Gurton's Needle,* written c. 1559, first printed in 1575. The identity of the author, Mr. S. of Cambridge, is still uncertain. This comedy contains many of the elements of the mediaeval comic interpolations in the mystery and miracle plays. Though the form is modeled after the Roman comedy, the characterization and life are English.

The earliest tragedy is the doleful and tedious play *Gorboduc; or Ferrex and Porrex* by **Sackville** and **Norton,** two gentlemen of the Queen's court. This tragedy is a typical imitation of Seneca's plays; the speeches in blank verse are uninterrupted pages long; everything that might have been dramatically interesting is narrated after it has taken place off stage; each act is preceded by a chorus in the form of a "dumb-show." *Gorboduc* was first acted by the Gentlemen of the Inner Temple as "furniture of part of the grand Christmasse in the Inner Temple," and then before Queen Elizabeth on the eighteenth day of January, 1561. Presumably it met with her Majesty's favor since it set a fashion in court plays; but it "pleased not the million; 'twas caviare to the general."[1] It would have bored an audience of the common people to utter tedium since nothing really happened on the stage. The crowd demanded first and foremost, *action.* They preferred the somewhat rambling *chronicle plays* based on incidents drawn from the authentic and legendary history of England's kings.

At this time in England there had sprung up strolling bands of professional actors who went from town to town, from village to village, acting scenes from miracle plays or from the chronicle histories. These strollers were all men, the women's parts being acted by boys; for no women acted professionally in England until the end of the seventeenth century. The performances were given on platforms or scaffolds, as they were called, erected out-of-doors in the courtyards of inns, and the surrounding galleries supplied the boxes for the spectators. Gradually these strollers drifted to London and gained the patronage of rich courtiers. In fact, unless actors were attached to the household of some noble, they were declared vagabonds and beggars. In 1568–69, when Shakespeare's father held the highest office in the Town Corporation, such a company, the Earl of Worcester's servants, gave a play in the Guildhall at Stratford-on-Avon.

Even at this time, however, there was no theatre in London. In 1572 all dramatic performances in London inn-yards were forbidden because of the plague. In 1576 the actor James Burbage, father of the famous Richard Burbage who acted the leading rôles in Shakespeare's plays, with four others, all servants (players) of the Earl of Leicester, leased land outside the city limits of London town, and there erected the first London theatre, calling it *The Theatre*. It was modeled after the inn yards, and all of the theatres subsequently erected in London followed the same general type until after 1660.

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[1] *Hamlet,* Act II, Scene 2, line 520, (page 209).

These Elizabethan theatres were small buildings, and the proximity of the audience to the stage produced the same effect as in the intimate or little theatre of today. There were three parts to the stage so that action could proceed rapidly without pauses to shift scenery. On the high wide platform that projected into the auditorium were enacted scenes which called for pageantry and crowds, or for no definite locality. Behind this a portion of the stage was covered by a roof, called the "heavens," supported on pillars. Doors on either side of this section served as exits and entrances for the actors. Farther back was an inner stage with a curtained recess and a balcony above. This could be used for interiors, or for arbors, shops, churches, caves, etc.; and the upper story became the balcony to the heroine's bed chamber or the walled battlements of a city, as the case demanded. The lower classes of the audience stood in the unroofed pit around and in front of the stage. The nobles and the rich folk paid a higher price to sit in the covered balconies that surrounded the three sides of the theatre, and frequently the young men about town sat on the stage itself. On such a stage as this, without scenery, without protection from the weather, without the glamour of artificial light—for the performances were given in the mid-afternoon—the plays of Shakespeare were acted.

Now that regular theatres were established in London—there were at least seven by the end of the year 1600[1]—the demand for plays began to exceed the supply. Literary drama and plays for the theatre were entirely distinct; but it was not long before young university graduates began to find writing popular plays a more profitable means of livelihood than composing learned dramas for the edification of scholars and courtiers. These *University Wits*, as they called themselves, were hard at work when Shakespeare first went to London between 1580 and 1595. The most important of them are: **John Lyly, Robert Greene, George Peele, Thomas Kyd,** and **Christopher Marlowe.** They began, probably, by revising and adapting old chronicle histories or translating Italian pastoral romances. Since they wrote to draw the crowds, they put into their plays whatever would delight the taste of the "groundlings" along with poetry and refined sentiment to appeal to the taste of the courtiers. Battle, murder, torture, madness, ghosts, fairies, royal processions and ceremonies, jokes and buffoonery, together with high-sounding declamation and eloquent poetry, characterized these early Elizabethan plays. Shakespeare himself wove all these elements into his own great dramas.

The most brilliant of the University Wits was **Christopher Marlowe** (1564–1593), who was born in the same year as Shakespeare, but who ended his tempestuous career in a tavern quarrel when he was only twenty-nine. Marlowe was a typical Elizabethan. His plays reflect his passionate, turbulent nature. The heroes are men of extravagant ambition stirred by vehement passions. The themes are the presumptuous sins. It was Marlowe's sonorous and musical poetry—"Marlowe's mighty line"[2]—that established blank verse as the medium for dramatic expression. It is possible that Shakespeare, when he was still an apprentice at writing plays, worked with Marlowe. It is certain that to him he owed much. Marlowe laid the foundations on which Shakespeare reared the mighty structure of English drama. The plays of Marlowe are: *Tamburlaine; Dr. Faustus; The Jew of Malta; Edward II.*

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[1] (1) The Theatre, 1576. (2) The Curtain, 1576. (3) The Rose, 1587–92. (4) The Swan, 1595. (5) Blackfriars, 1596, roofed; on first floor of Blackfriars monastery. (6) The Globe, 1598. (7) The First Fortune, 1600. (8) The Red Bull, c. 1600.

[2] Ben Jonson: "To the Memory of My Beloved Master William Shakespeare and What He Hath Left Us," line 30.

# THE TRAGICAL HISTORY OF DR. FAUSTUS[1]

From the Quarto of 1604[2]

CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE

*Acted on September 30, 1594*

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

THE POPE
CARDINAL OF LORRAIN
THE EMPEROR OF GERMANY
DUKE OF VANHOLT
FAUSTUS
VALDES, } *friends to* FAUSTUS
CORNELIUS, }
WAGNER, *servant to* FAUSTUS
CLOWN
ROBIN
RALPH
VINTNER
HORSE-COURSER[3]
A KNIGHT
AN OLD MAN

SCHOLARS, FRIARS, *and* ATTENDANTS

DUCHESS OF VANHOLT

LUCIFER
BELZEBUB
MEPHISTOPHILIS
GOOD ANGEL
EVIL ANGEL
THE SEVEN DEADLY SINS
DEVILS
SPIRITS *in the shapes of* ALEXANDER THE GREAT, *of his* PARAMOUR *and of* HELEN
CHORUS

*Enter* CHORUS

*Chorus.* Not marching now in fields of Thrasymene,
Where Mars did mate[4] the Carthaginians;[5]
Nor sporting in the dalliance of love,
In courts of kings where state is overturn'd;
Nor in the pomp of proud audacious deeds,
Intends our Muse to vaunt her heavenly verse:
Only this, gentlemen,—we must perform
The form of Faustus' fortunes, good or bad:
To patient judgments we appeal our plaud,[6]
And speak for Faustus in his infancy.
Now is he born, his parents base of stock,
In Germany, within a town call'd Rhodes:
Of riper years, to Wertenberg he went,
Whereas[7] his kinsmen chiefly brought him up.
So soon he profits in divinity,
The fruitful plot of scholarism grac'd,
That shortly he was grac'd with doctor's name,
Excelling all whose sweet delight disputes
In heavenly matters of theology;
Till swoln with cunning, of a self-conceit,
His waxen wings did mount above his reach,
And, melting, heavens conspir'd his overthrow;[8]
For, falling to a devilish exercise,
And glutted now with learning's golden gifts,
He surfeits upon cursed necromancy;[9]

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[1] Editor's Note: This play has been cut slightly.

[2] Probably written in 1589. First printed in 1604.

[3] Courser: dealer.

[4] mate: oppose, match.

[5] Carthaginians. Hannibal led the Carthaginians to victory over the Romans at the Battle of Lake Trasimenus, 217 B.C.

[6] plaud: applause.

[7] Whereas: where.

[8] . . . wings . . . overthrow. Like Icarus in Greek mythology.

[9] necromancy: the black art; *i.e.*, magic (lit., divination through communication with the spirits of the dead).

Nothing so sweet as magic is to him,
Which he prefers before his chiefest bliss:
And this the man that in his study sits.
[*Exit*

### Scene I

Faustus *discovered in his study*

*Faustus.* Settle[1] thy studies, Faustus, and begin
To sound the depth of that thou wilt profess:
Having commenc'd, be a divine in show,
Yet level[2] at the end of every art,
And live and die in Aristotle's works.
Sweet Analytics, 'tis thou hast ravish'd me!
*Bene disserere est finis logices.*[3]
Is, to dispute well, logic's chiefest end?
Affords this art no greater miracle?
Then read no more; thou hast attain'd that end:
A greater subject fitteth Faustus' wit:
Bid Economy[4] farewell, and Galen[5] come,
Seeing, *Ubi desinit philosophus, ibi incipit medicus:*[6]
Be a physician, Faustus; heap up gold,
And be eternis'd for some wondrous cure:
*Summum bonum medicinæ sanitas,*[7]
The end of physic is our body's health.
Why, Faustus, hast thou not attain'd that end?
Is not thy common talk found aphorisms?
Are not thy bills[8] hung up as monuments,
Whereby whole cities have escap'd the plague,
And thousand desperate maladies been eas'd?
Yet art thou still but Faustus, and a man.
Couldst thou make men to live eternally,
Or, being dead, raise them to life again,
Then this profession were to be esteem'd.
Physic, farewell! Where is Justinian?[9]
[*Reads.*]
*Si una eademque res legatur duobus, alter rem, alter valorem, rei, etc.*[10]
A pretty case of paltry legacies!
[*Reads.*]
*Exhæreditare filium non potest pater, nisi, etc.*[11]
Such is the subject of the institute,
And universal body of the law:
This study fits a mercenary drudge,
Who aims at nothing but external trash;
Too servile and illiberal for me.
When all is done, divinity is best:
Jerome's Bible,[12] Faustus; view it well.
[*Reads.*]
*Stipendium peccati mors est.*[13] Ha! *Stipendium, etc.*
The reward of sin is death: that's hard.
[*Reads.*]
*Si peccasse negamus, fallimur, et nulla est in nobis veritas;*[13]
If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and there's no truth in us.
Why, then, belike we must sin, and so consequently die:
Ay, we must die an everlasting death.
What doctrine call you this, *Che sera, sera,*[13]
What will be, shall be? Divinity, adieu!
These metaphysics of magicians,
And necromantic books are heavenly;
Lines, circles, scenes, letters, and characters;
Ay, these are those that Faustus most desires.
O, what a world of profit and delight,
Of power, of honour, of omnipotence,
Is promis'd to the studious artisan![14]
All things that move between the quiet poles
Shall be at my command: emperors and kings
Are but obeyed in their several provinces,

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[1] **Settle:** determine upon.

[2] **level:** aim at.

[3] **Bene . . . logices:** "To dispute well is the purpose of logic."

[4] **Economy:** Logic.

[5] **Galen:** Claudius Galenus, the most famous of the ancient writers on medicine.

[6] **Ubi . . . medicus:** "Where philosophy leaves off, medicine begins."

[7] **Summum . . . sanitas.** Translated by Faustus in the following line.

[8] **bills:** documents, prescriptions.

[9] **Justinian:** a Roman emperor of the 6th century, famous for his codification of law.

[10] **Si . . . etc.** "If one and the same thing be bequeathed to two persons, one shall have the thing itself, the other the value of it,—etc."

[11] **Exhæreditare . . . etc.** "A father may not disinherit his son, unless,—etc."

[12] **Jerome's Bible:** the Vulgate: Latin Bible of the 4th century prepared by St. Jerome.

[13] **Stipendium . . . , Si . . . veritas, Che . . . sera.** Translated by Faustus himself in the following lines.

[14] **artisan:** one who professes and studies an art.

Nor can they raise the wind, or rend the clouds;
But his dominion that exceeds in this,
Stretcheth as far as doth the mind of man;
A sound magician is a mighty god:
Here, Faustus, tire thy brains to gain a deity.

*Enter* Wagner

Wagner, commend me to my dearest friends,
The German Valdes and Cornelius;
Request them earnestly to visit me.
*Wagner.* I will, sir. [*Exit*
*Faust.* Their conference will be a greater help to me
Than all my labours, plod I ne'er so fast.

*Enter* Good Angel *and* Evil Angel

*Good Angel.* O, Faustus, lay thy damned book aside,
And gaze not on it, lest it tempt thy soul,
And heap God's heavy wrath upon thy head!
Read, read the Scriptures:—that is blasphemy.
*Evil Angel.* Go forward, Faustus, in that famous art[1]
Wherein all Nature's treasure is contain'd:
Be thou on earth as Jove is in the sky,
Lord and commander of these elements.
[*Exeunt* Angels
*Faust.* How am I glutted with conceit of this!
Shall I make spirits fetch me what I please,
Resolve[2] me of all ambiguities,
Perform what desperate enterprise I will?
I'll have them fly to India for gold,
Ransack the ocean for orient pearl,
And search all corners of the new-found world[3]
For pleasant fruits and princely delicates;
I'll have them read me strange philosophy,
And tell the secrets of all foreign kings;
I'll have them wall all Germany with brass,
And make swift Rhine circle fair Wertenberg;
I'll have them fill the public schools with silk,
Wherewith the students shall be bravely clad;
I'll levy soldiers with the coin they bring,
And chase the Prince of Parma[4] from our land,
And reign sole king of all the provinces;
Yea, stranger engines for the brunt of war,
Than was the fiery keel at Antwerp's bridge,[4]
I'll make my servile spirits to invent.

*Enter* Valdes *and* Cornelius

Come, German Valdes and Cornelius,
And make me blest with your sage conference.
Valdes, sweet Valdes, and Cornelius,
Know that your words have won me at the last
To practise magic and concealed arts:
Yet not your words only, but mine own fantasy,
That will receive no object[5]; for my head
But ruminates on necromantic skill.
Philosophy is odious and obscure;
Both law and physic are for petty wits;
Divinity is basest of the three,
Unpleasant, harsh, contemptible, and vile:
'Tis magic, magic, that hath ravish'd me.
Then, gentle friends, aid me in this attempt;
And I, that have with concise syllogisms
Gravell'd[6] the pastors of the German church,
And made the flowering pride of Wertenberg
Swarm to my problems, as the infernal spirits
On sweet Musæus[7] when he came to hell,
Will be as cunning as Agrippa[8] was,
Whose shadow made all Europe honour him.

---

[1] **famous art:** necromancy.

[2] **Resolve:** Make clear to me.

[3] **new-found world:** America.

[4] **Prince of Parma . . . Antwerp's bridge.** During the blockade of Antwerp by the Prince of Parma in 1585, the townspeople blew up the bridge by a ship filled with powder.

[5] **receive no object:** listen to no objection.

[6] **Gravell'd:** puzzled.

[7] **Musæus:** mythical god of music, son of Orpheus.

[8] **Agrippa:** Cornelius Agrippa, writer and reputed magician of the 16th century.

*Valdes.* Faustus, these books, thy wit, and our experience,
Shall make all nations to canonise us.
As Indian Moors obey their Spanish lords,
So shall the spirits of every element
Be always serviceable to us three;
Like lions shall they guard us when we please;
Like Almain rutters[1] with their horsemen's staves;
Or Lapland giants, trotting by our sides;
Sometimes like women, or unwedded maids,
Shadowing more beauty in their airy brows
Than have the white breasts of the queen of love:
From Venice shall they drag huge argosies,
And from America the golden fleece
That yearly stuffs old Philip's[2] treasury;
If learned Faustus will be resolute.
*Faust.* Valdes, as resolute am I in this
As thou to live: therefore object it not.
*Cornelius.* The miracles that magic will perform
Will make thee vow to study nothing else.
He that is grounded in astrology,
Enrich'd with tongues, well seen in minerals,
Hath all the principles magic doth require:
Then doubt not, Faustus, but to be renown'd,
And more frequented for this mystery
Than heretofore the Delphian oracle.
The spirits tell me they can dry the sea,
And fetch the treasure of all foreign wrecks,
Ay, all the wealth that our forefathers hid
Within the massy entrails of the earth:
Then tell me, Faustus, what shall we three want?
*Faust.* Nothing, Cornelius. O, this cheers my soul!
Come, show me some demonstrations magical,
That I may conjure in some lusty grove,
And have these joys in full possession.
*Vald.* Then haste thee to some solitary grove,
And bear wise Bacon's[3] and Albertus'[4] works,
The Hebrew Psalter, and New Testament;
And whatsoever else is requisite
We will inform thee ere our conference cease.
*Corn.* Valdes, first let him know the words of art;
And then, all other ceremonies learn'd,
Faustus may try his cunning by himself.
*Vald.* First I'll instruct thee in the rudiments,
And then wilt thou be perfecter than I.
*Faust.* Then come and dine with me, and, after meat,
We'll canvass every quiddity[5] thereof;
For, ere I sleep, I'll try what I can do:
This night I'll conjure, though I die therefore. [*Exeunt*

## SCENE II

*Before Faustus's house*[6]

*Enter two* SCHOLARS

*1st Scholar.* I wonder what's become of Faustus, that was wont to make our schools ring with *sic probo.*[7]

*2nd Schol.* That shall we know, for see, here comes his boy.

*Enter* WAGNER

*1st Schol.* How now, sirrah! where's thy master?

*Wag.* God in heaven knows.

*2nd Schol.* Why, dost not thou know?

*Wag.* Yes, I know; but that follows not.

*1st Schol.* Go to, sirrah! leave your jesting, and tell us where he is.

*Wag.* That follows not necessary by force of argument, that you, being licentiates,[8] should stand upon: therefore acknowledge your error, and be attentive.

---

[1] **Almain rutters:** German troopers.

[2] **old Philip's:** the King of Spain's.

[3] **Bacon:** Roger Bacon.

[4] **Albertus:** Albertus Magnus, philosopher and scholar at Cologne in the 13th century.

[5] **quiddity:** peculiar essence or nature.

[6] Some scholars consider that the farcical elements in this play are not the work of Marlowe.

[7] **sic probo:** "Thus I prove."

[8] **licentiates:** holding a degree between bachelor of arts and doctor.

*2nd Schol.* Why, didst thou not say thou knewest?

*Wag.* Have you any witness on't?

*1st Schol.* Yes, sirrah, I heard you.

*Wag.* Ask my fellow if I be a thief.

*2nd Schol.* Well, you will not tell us?

*Wag.* Yes, sir, I will tell you; yet, if you were not dunces, you would never ask me such a question, for is not he *corpus naturale?*[1] and is not that *mobile?*[2] then wherefore should you ask me such a question? But that I am by nature phlegmatic, slow to wrath, and prone to lechery (to love, I would say), it were not for you to come within forty foot of the place of execution,[3] although I do not doubt to see you both hanged the next sessions. Thus having triumphed over you, I will set my countenance like a precisian,[4] and begin to speak thus:—Truly, my dear brethren, my master is within at dinner, with Valdes and Cornelius, as this wine, if it could speak, would inform your worships: and so, the Lord bless you, preserve you, and keep you, my dear brethren, my dear brethren! [*Exit*

*1st Schol.* Nay, then, I fear he has fallen into that damned art for which they two are infamous through the world.

*2nd Schol.* Were he a stranger, and not allied to me, yet should I grieve for him. But, come, let us go and inform the Rector,[5] and see if he by his grave counsel can reclaim him.

*1st Schol.* O, but I fear me nothing can reclaim him!

*2nd Schol.* Yet let us try what we can do. [*Exeunt*

### SCENE III

*A Grove*

*Enter* FAUSTUS *to conjure*

*Faust.* Now that the gloomy shadow of the earth,
Longing to view Orion's drizzling look,[6]
Leaps from th' antarctic world unto the sky,
And dims the welkin with her pitchy breath,
Faustus, begin thine incantations,
And try if devils will obey thy hest,
Seeing thou hast pray'd and sacrific'd to them.
Within this circle is Jehovah's name,
Forward and backward anagrammatis'd,
Th' abbreviated names of holy saints,
Figures of every adjunct to the heavens,
And characters of signs and erring stars,
By which the spirits are enforc'd to rise:
Then fear not, Faustus, but be resolute,
And try the uttermost magic can perform.—
*Sint mihi dei Acherontis propitii! Valeat numen triplex Jehovæ! Ignei, aërii, aquatani spiritus, salvete! Orientis princeps Belzebub, inferni ardentis monarcha, et Demogorgon, propitiamus vos, ut appareat et surgat Mephistophilis, quod tumeraris: per Jehovam, Gehennam, et consecratam aquam quam nunc spargo, signumque crucis quod nunc facio, et per vota nostra, ipse nunc surgat nobis dicatus Mephistophilis!*[7]

*Enter* MEPHISTOPHILIS

I charge thee to return, and change thy shape;
Thou art too ugly to attend on me:
Go, and return an old Franciscan friar;
That holy shape becomes a devil best.
[*Exit* MEPHISTOPHILIS
I see there's virtue in my heavenly words:
Who would not be proficient in this art?
How pliant is this Mephistophilis,
Full of obedience and humility!
Such is the force of magic and my spells:
No, Faustus, thou art conjuror laureat,
That canst command great Mephistophilis.

*Re-enter* MEPHISTOPHILIS *like a Franciscan friar*

*Mephistophilis.* Now, Faustus, what wouldst thou have me do?

---

[1] **corpus naturale:** a natural body.

[2] **mobile:** movable.

[3] **place of execution:** the dining hall.

[4] **precisian:** Puritan.

[5] **Rector:** President of the University.

[6] **drizzling look:** Orion was supposed to bring rain.

[7] **Sint......Mephistophilis!** "May the gods of Acheron be propitious to me! May the triple name of Jehovah prevail! Ye spirits of fire, of air, of water, hail! Belzebub, prince of the East, monarch of burning hell, and Demogorgon, we propitiate you in order that Mephistophilis may appear and arise [*text corrupt*] in the name of Jehovah, of Gehenna, and of the consecrated water which now I sprinkle, and by the sign of the cross which now I make, and by our vows, let Mephistophilis himself, whom we have called, arise to us!"

*Faust.* I charge thee wait upon me whilst I live,
To do whatever Faustus shall command,
Be it to make the moon drop from her sphere,
Or the ocean to overwhelm the world.
*Meph.* I am a servant to great Lucifer,
And may not follow thee without his leave:
No more than he commands must we perform.
*Faust.* Did not he charge thee to appear to me?
*Meph.* No, I came hither of mine own accord.
*Faust.* Did not my conjuring speeches raise thee? speak.
*Meph.* That was the cause, but yet *per accidens*;[1]
For, when we hear one rack[2] the name of God,
Abjure the Scriptures and his Saviour Christ,
We fly, in hope, to get his glorious soul;
Nor will we come, unless he use such means
Whereby he is in danger to be damn'd.
Therefore the shortest cut for conjuring
Is stoutly to abjure the Trinity,
And pray devoutly to the prince of hell.
*Faust.* So Faustus hath
Already done; and holds this principle,
There is no chief but only Belzebub;
To whom Faustus doth dedicate himself.
This word "damnation" terrifies not him,
For he confounds hell in Elysium:[3]
His ghost be with the old philosophers!
But, leaving these vain trifles of men's souls,
Tell me what is that Lucifer thy lord?
*Meph.* Arch-regent and commander of all spirits.
*Faust.* Was not that Lucifer an angel once?
*Meph.* Yes, Faustus, and most dearly lov'd of God.
*Faust.* How comes it, then, that he is prince of devils?
*Meph.* O, by aspiring pride and insolence;
For which God threw him from the face of heaven.
*Faust.* And what are you that live with Lucifer?
*Meph.* Unhappy spirits that fell with Lucifer?
Conspir'd against our God with Lucifer,
And are for ever damn'd with Lucifer.
*Faust.* Where are you damn'd?
*Meph.* In hell.
*Faust.* How comes it, then, that thou art out of hell?
*Meph.* Why, this is hell, nor am I out of it.[4]
Think'st thou that I, who saw the face of God,
And tasted the eternal joys of heaven,
Am not tormented with ten thousand hells,
In being depriv'd of everlasting bliss?
O, Faustus, leave these frivolous demands,
Which strike a terror to my fainting soul!
*Faust.* What, is great Mephistophilis so passionate
For being deprived of the joys of heaven?
Learn thou of Faustus manly fortitude
And scorn those joys thou never shalt possess.
Go bear these tidings to great Lucifer:
Seeing Faustus hath incurr'd eternal death
By desperate thoughts against Jove's deity,
Say, he surrenders up to him his soul,
So he will spare him four-and-twenty years,
Letting him live in all voluptuousness;
Having thee ever to attend on me,
To give me whatsoever I shall ask,
To tell me whatsoever I demand,
To slay mine enemies, and aid my friends,
And always be obedient to my will.
Go and return to mighty Lucifer,
And meet me in my study at midnight,
And then resolve me of thy master's mind.
*Meph.* I will, Faustus. [*Exit*
*Faust.* Had I as many souls as there be stars,
I'd give them all for Mephistophilis.

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[1] **per accidens:** by accident.
[2] **rack:** pervert.
[3] **Elysium:** paradise.
[4] cf. *Paradise Lost*, IV, 75; *Hamlet*, Act II, Sc. II, l. 272, (page 206).

By him I'll be great emperor of the world,
And make a bridge thorough the moving air,
To pass the ocean with a band of men;
I'll join the hills that bind the Afric shore,
And make that country continent[1] to Spain,
And both contributory to my crown:
The Emperor shall not live but by my leave,
Nor any potentate of Germany.
Now that I have obtained what I desir'd,
I'll live in speculation of this art,
Till Mephistophilis return again.
[*Exit*

## Scene IV

### *A Street*

*Enter* Wagner *and* Clown

*Wag.* Sirrah boy, come hither.

*Clown.* How, boy! swowns, boy! I hope you have seen many boys with such pickadevaunts[2] as I have: boy, quotha!

*Wag.* Tell me, sirrah, hast thou any comings in?

*Clown.* Ay, and goings out too; you may see else.

*Wag.* Alas, poor slave! see how poverty jesteth in his nakedness! the villain is bare and out of service, and so hungry, that I know he would give his soul to the devil for a shoulder of mutton, though it were blood-raw.

*Clown.* How! my soul to the devil for a shoulder of mutton, though 'twere blood-raw! not so, good friend: by'r lady, I had need have it well roasted, and good sauce to it, if I pay so dear.

*Wag.* Well, wilt thou serve me, and I'll make thee go like *Qui mihi discipulus*.[3]

*Clown.* How, in verse?

*Wag.* No, sirrah; in beaten silk and staves-acre.[4]

*Clown.* How, how, knaves-acre! ay, I thought that was all the land his father left him. Do you hear? I would be sorry to rob you of your living.

*Wag.* Sirrah, I say in staves-acre.

*Clown.* Oho, oho, staves-acre! why, then, belike, if I were your man, I should be full of vermin.

*Wag.* So thou shalt, whether thou beest with me or no. But, sirrah, leave your jesting, and bind yourself presently unto me for seven years, or I'll turn all the lice about thee into familiars, and they shall tear thee in pieces.

*Clown.* Do you hear, sir? you may save that labour; they are too familiar with me already: swowns, they are as bold with my flesh as if they had paid for their meat and drink.

*Wag.* Well, do your hear, sirrah? hold, take these guilders.
*Gives money.*

*Clown.* Gridirons! what be they?

*Wag.* Why, French crowns.

*Clown.* Mass, but for the name of French crowns, a man were as good have as many English counters. And what should I do with these?

*Wag.* Why, now, sirrah, thou art at an hour's warning, whensoever and wheresoever the devil shall fetch thee.

*Clown.* No, no; here, take your gridirons again.

*Wag.* Truly, I'll none of them.

*Clown.* Truly, but you shall.

*Wag.* Bear witness I gave them him.

*Clown.* Bear witness I give them you again.

*Wag.* Well, I will cause two devils presently to fetch thee away.—Baliol and Belcher!

*Clown.* Let your Baliol and your Belcher come here, and I'll knock them, they were never so knocked since they were devils: say I should kill one of them, what would folks say? "Do ye see yonder tall fellow in the round slop?[5] he has killed the devil." So I should be called Kill-devil all the parish over.

*Enter two* Devils; *and the* Clown *runs up and down crying*

*Wag.* Baliol and Belcher,—spirits, away! [*Exeunt* Devils

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[1] continent: connected.
[2] pickadevaunts: Vandyke beards.
[3] Qui . . . discipulus: Whoever is my disciple.
[4] staves-acre: larkspur (as a cure for lice).
[5] round slop: loose breeches.

*Clown.* What, are they gone? a vengeance on them! they have vile long nails. There was a he-devil and a she-devil: I'll tell you how you shall know them; all he-devils has horns, and all she-devils has cloven feet.

*Wag.* Well, sirrah, follow me.

*Clown.* But, do you hear? if I should serve you, would you teach me to raise up Banios and Belcheos?

*Wag.* I will teach thee to turn thyself to anything, to a dog, or a cat, or a mouse, or a rat, or anything.

*Clown.* How! a Christian fellow to a dog, or a cat, a mouse, or a rat! no, no, sir; if you turn me into anything, let it be in the likeness of a little pretty frisking flea, that I may be here and there and everywhere.

*Wag.* Well, sirrah, come.

*Clown.* But, do you hear, Wagner?

*Wag.* How!—Baliol and Belcher!

*Clown.* O Lord! I pray, sir, let Banio and Belcher go sleep.

*Wag.* Villain, call me Master Wagner, and let thy left eye be diametarily fixed upon my right heel, with *quasi vestigiis nostris insistere.*[1] [*Exit*

*Clown.* God forgive me, he speaks Dutch fustian.[2]
Well, I'll follow him; I'll serve him, that's flat. [*Exit*

### SCENE V

FAUSTUS *discovered in his study*

*Faust.* Now, Faustus, must
Thou needs be damn'd and canst thou not be sav'd:
What boots it, then, to think of God or heaven?
Away with such vain fancies, and despair;
Despair in God, and trust in Belzebub:
Now go not backward; no, Faustus, be resolute:
Why waver'st thou? O, something soundeth in mine ears,
"Abjure this magic, turn to God again!"
Ay, and Faustus will turn to God again.
To God? he loves thee not;
The god thou serv'st is thine own appetite,
Wherein is fix'd the love of Belzebub:
To him I'll build an altar and a church,
And offer lukewarm blood of new-born babes.

*Enter* GOOD ANGEL *and* EVIL ANGEL

*G. Ang.* Sweet Faustus, leave that execrable art.

*Faust.* Contrition, prayer, repentance—what of them?

*G. Ang.* O, they are means to bring thee unto heaven!

*E. Ang.* Rather illusions, fruits of lunacy,
That make men foolish that do trust them most.

*G. Ang.* Sweet Faustus, think of heaven and heavenly things.

*E. Ang.* No, Faustus; think of honour and of wealth.

[*Exeunt* ANGELS

*Faust.* Of wealth!
Why, the signiory of Embden[3] shall be mine.
When Mephistophilis shall stand by me,
What god can hurt thee, Faustus? thou art safe:
Cast no more doubts.—Come, Mephistophilis,
And bring glad tidings from great Lucifer;—
Is't not midnight?—come, Mephistophilis,
*Veni, veni Mephistophile!*[4]

*Enter* MEPHISTOPHILIS

Now tell me what says Lucifer, thy lord?

*Meph.* That I shall wait on Faustus whilst he lives,
So he will buy my service with his soul.

*Faust.* Already Faustus hath hazarded that for thee.

*Meph.* But, Faustus, thou must bequeath it solemnly,
And write a deed of gift with thine own blood;
For that security craves great Lucifer.
If thou deny it, I will back to hell.

*Faust.* Stay, Mephistophilis, and tell me, what good will my soul do thy lord?

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[1] **quasi . . . insistere:** "as if to tread in our footsteps."

[2] **fustian:** jargon.

[3] **signiory of Embden:** domain of Embden,—a rich German town.

[4] **Veni, . . . Mephistophile!** "Come, come, Mephistophilis!"

*Meph.* Enlarge his kingdom.
*Faust.* Is that the reason why he tempts us thus?
*Meph.* *Solamen miseris socios habuisse doloris.*[1]
*Faust.* Why, have you any pain that torture others!
*Meph.* As great as have the human souls of men.
But, tell me, Faustus, shall I have thy soul?
And I will be thy slave, and wait on thee,
And give thee more than thou hast wit to ask.
*Faust.* Ay, Mephistophilis, I give it thee.
*Meph.* Then, Faustus, stab thy arm courageously,
And bind thy soul, that at some certain day
Great Lucifer may claim it as his own;
And then be thou as great as Lucifer.
*Faust.* [*stabbing his arm*]. Lo, Mephistophilis, for love of thee
I cut mine arm, and with my proper blood
Assure my soul to be great Lucifer's,
Chief lord and regent of perpetual night!
View here the blood that trickles from mine arm,
And let it be propitious for my wish.
*Meph.* But, Faustus, thou must
Write it in manner of a deed of gift.
*Faust.* Ay, so I will [*writes*]. But, Mephistophilis,
My blood congeals, and I can write no more.
*Meph.* I'll fetch thee fire to dissolve it straight. [*Exit*
*Faust.* Why might the staying of my blood portend?
Is it unwilling I should write this bill?
Why streams it not, that I may write afresh?
*Faustus gives to thee his soul:* ah, there it stay'd!
Why shouldst thou not? is not thy soul thine own?
Then write again, *Faustus gives to thee his soul.*

*Re-enter* MEPHISTOPHILIS *with a chafer*[2] *of coals*

*Meph.* Here's fire; come, Faustus, set it on.
*Faust.* So, now the blood begins to clear again;
Now will I make an end immediately.
*Writes.*
*Meph.* [*aside*]. O, what will not I do to obtain his soul!
*Faust.* *Consummatum est;*[3] this bill is ended,
And Faustus hath bequeathed his soul to Lucifer.
But what is this inscription on mine arm?
*Homo, fuge:*[4] whither should I fly?
If unto God, he'll throw me down to hell.
My senses are deceiv'd; here's nothing writ:—
I see it plain; here in this place is writ,
*Homo, fuge:* yet shall not Faustus fly.
*Meph.* [*aside*]. I'll fetch him somewhat to delight his mind. [*Exit*

*Re-enter* MEPHISTOPHILIS *with* Devils, *who give crowns and rich apparel to* FAUSTUS, *dance, and then depart*

*Faust.* Speak, Mephistophilis, what means this show?
*Meph.* Nothing, Faustus, but to delight thy mind withal,
And to show thee what magic can perform.
*Faust.* But may I raise up spirits when I please?
*Meph.* Ay, Faustus, and do greater things than these.
*Faust.* Then there's enough for a thousand souls.
Here, Mephistophilis, receive this scroll,
A deed of gift of body and of soul:
But yet conditionally that thou perform
All articles prescrib'd between us both.
*Meph.* Faustus, I swear by hell and Lucifer
To effect all promises between us made!
*Faust.* Then hear me read them.

[*Reads.*] *On these conditions following. First, that Faustus may be a spirit in form and substance. Secondly, that Mephis-*

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[1] Solamen . . . doloris: "It is a solace to the wretched, to have companions in their grief."

[2] chafer: brazier.

[3] Consummatum est: "It is finished."

[4] Homo, fuge: "Flee, O man!"

*tophilis shall be his servant, and at his command. Thirdly, that Mephistophilis shall do for him, and bring him whatsoever he desires. Fourthly, that he shall be in his chamber or house invisible. Lastly, that he shall appear to the said John Faustus, at all times, in what form or shape soever he please. I, John Faustus, of Wertenberg, Doctor, by these presents, do give both body and soul to Lucifer prince of the east, and his minister Mephistophilis; and furthermore grant unto them, that, twenty-four years being expired, the articles above-written inviolate, full power to fetch or carry the said John Faustus, body and soul, flesh, blood, or goods, into their habitation wheresoever. By me, John Faustus.*

*Meph.* Speak, Faustus, do you deliver this as your deed?
*Faust.* Ay, take it, and the devil give thee good on't!
*Meph.* Now, Faustus, ask what thou wilt.
*Faust.* First will I question with thee about hell.
Tell me, where is the place that men call hell?
*Meph.* Under the heavens.
*Faust.* Ay, but whereabout?
*Meph.* Within the bowels of these elements,
Where we are tortur'd and remain for ever:
Hell hath no limits, nor is circumscrib'd
In one self place; for where we are is hell,
And where hell is, there must we ever be:
And, to conclude, when all the world dissolves,
And every creature shall be purified,
All places shall be hell that are not heaven.
*Faust.* Come, I think hell's a fable.
*Meph.* Ay, think so still, till experience change thy mind.
*Faust.* Why, think'st thou, then, that Faustus shall be damn'd?
*Meph.* Ay, of necessity, for here's the scroll
Wherein thou hast given thy soul to Lucifer.
*Faust.* Ay, and body too: but what of that?
Think'st thou that Faustus is so fond to imagine
That, after this life, there is any pain?
Tush, these are trifles and mere old wives' tales.
*Meph.* But, Faustus, I am an instance to prove the contrary
For I am damn'd, and am now in hell.
*Faust.* How! now in hell!
Nay, an this be hell, I'll willingly be damn'd here:
What! walking, disputing, etc.
But, leaving off this, let me have a wife,
The fairest maid in Germany.
*Meph.* How! a wife!
I prithee, Faustus, talk not of a wife.
*Faust.* Nay, sweet Mephistophilis, fetch me one, for I will have one.
*Meph.* Well, thou wilt have one? Sit there till I come: I'll fetch thee a wife in the devil's name. [*Exit*

*Re-enter* MEPHISTOPHILIS *with a* Devil *drest like a Woman, with fireworks*

*Meph.* Tell me, Faustus, how dost thou like thy wife?
*Faust.* A plague on her!
*Meph.* Tut, Faustus,
Marriage is but a ceremonial toy;
If thou lovest me, think no more of it.
She whom thine eye shall like, thy heart shall have,
Be she as chaste as was Penelope,
As wise as Saba,[1] or as beautiful
As was bright Lucifer before his fall.
Hold, take this book, peruse it thoroughly:
[*Gives book.*]
The iterating of these lines brings gold;
The framing of this circle on the ground
Brings whirlwinds, tempests, thunder, and lightning;
Pronounce this thrice devoutly to thyself,
And men in armour shall appear to thee,
Ready to execute what thou desir'st.
*Faust.* Thanks, Mephistophilis: yet fain would I have a book wherein I might behold all spells and incantations, that I might raise up spirits when I please.
*Meph.* Here they are in this book. *Turns to them.*

---

[1] Saba: The Queen of Sheba (see: I Kings 10; or II Chron. 9).

*Faust.* Now would I have a book where I might see all characters and planets of the heavens, that I might know their motions and dispositions.

*Meph.* Here they are too.

*Turns to them.*

*Faust.* Nay, let me have one book more,—and then I have done,—wherein I might see all plants, herbs and trees, that grow upon the earth.

*Meph.* Here they be.

*Faust.* O, thou art deceived.

*Meph.* Tut, I warrant thee.

[*Turns to them. Exeunt*

### Scene VI

*A Room in Faustus's House*

*Faust.* When I behold the heavens, then I repent,
And curse thee, wicked Mephistophilis,
Because thou hast depriv'd me of those joys.

*Meph.* Why, Faustus,
Thinkest thou heaven is such a glorious thing?
I tell thee, 'tis not half so fair as thou,
Or any man that breathes on earth.

*Faust.* How prov'st thou that?

*Meph.* 'Twas made for man, therefore is man more excellent.

*Faust.* If it were made for man, 'twas made for me:
I will renounce this magic and repent.

*Enter* Good Angel *and* Evil Angel

*G. Ang.* Faustus, repent; yet God will pity thee.

*E. Ang.* Thou art a spirit; God cannot pity thee.

*Faust.* Who buzzeth in mine ears I am a spirit?
Be I a devil, yet God may pity me;
Ay, God will pity me, if I repent.

*E. Ang.* Ay, but Faustus never shall repent. [*Exeunt* Angels

*Faust.* My heart's so harden'd, I cannot repent:
Scarce can I name salvation, faith, or heaven,
But fearful echoes thunder in mine ears,
"Faustus, thou art damn'd!" then swords, and knives,
Poison, guns, halters, and envenom'd steel
Are laid before me to despatch myself;
And long ere this I should have slain myself,
Had not sweet pleasure conquer'd deep despair.
Have not I made blind Homer sing to me
Of Alexander's love and Œnon's[1] death?
And hath not he, that built the walls of Thebes[2]
With ravishing sound of his melodious harp,
Made music with my Mephistophilis?
Why should I die, then, or basely despair!
I am resolv'd; Faustus shall ne'er repent.—
Come, Mephistophilis, let us dispute again,
And argue of divine astrology.
Tell me, are there many heavens above the moon?
Are all celestial bodies but one globe,
As is the substance of this centric earth?[3]

*Meph.* As are the elements, such are the spheres,
Mutually folded in each other's orb,
And, Faustus,
All jointly move upon one axletree,
Whose terminus is term'd the world's wide pole;
Nor are the names of Saturn, Mars, or Jupiter
Feign'd, but are erring[4] stars.

*Faust.* But, tell me, have they all one motion, both *situ et tempore?*[5]

*Meph.* All jointly move from east to west in twenty-four hours upon the poles of the world; but differ in their motion upon the poles of the zodiac.

*Faust.* Tush,
These slender trifles Wagner can decide:
Hath Mephistophilis no greater skill?
Who knows not the double motion of the planets?

---

[1] **Œnone:** a mountain nymph, killed herself for love of Paris (Alexander).

[2] **he . . . Thebes:** Amphion in Greek myth.

[3] **centric earth:** in the Ptolemaic system the earth was considered the center of the Universe.

[4] **erring:** wandering.

[5] **situ et tempore:** in place and time.

The first is finish'd in a natural day;
The second thus; as Saturn in thirty years; Jupiter in twelve; Mars in four; the Sun, Venus, and Mercury in a year; the Moon in twenty-eight days. Tush, these are freshmen's suppositions. But, tell me, hath every sphere a dominion or *intelligentia?*[1]

*Meph.* Ay.

*Faust.* How many heavens or spheres are there?

*Meph.* Nine; the seven planets, the firmament, and the empyreal heaven.

*Faust.* Well resolve me in this question; why have we not conjunctions, oppositions, aspects, eclipses, all at one time, but in some years we have more, in some less?

*Meph. Per inæqualem motum respectu totius.*[2]

*Faust.* Well, I am answered. Tell me who made the world?

*Meph.* I will not.

*Faust.* Sweet Mephistophilis, tell me.

*Meph.* Move me not, for I will not tell thee.

*Faust.* Villain, have I not bound thee to tell me anything?

*Meph.* Ay, that is not against our kingdom; but this is.
Think thou on hell, Faustus, for thou art damned.

*Faust.* Think, Faustus, upon God that made the world.

*Meph.* Remember this. [*Exit*

*Faust.* Ay, go, accursed spirit, to ugly hell!
'Tis thou hast damn'd distressed Faustus's soul.
Is't not too late?

*Re-enter* GOOD ANGEL *and* EVIL ANGEL

*E. Ang.* Too late.

*G. Ang.* Never too late, if Faustus can repent.

*E. Ang.* If thou repent, devils shall tear thee in pieces.

*G. Ang.* Repent, and they shall never raze thy skin. [*Exeunt* ANGELS

*Faust.* Ah, Christ, my Saviour,
Seek to save distressed Faustus' soul!

*Enter* LUCIFER, BELZEBUB, *and* MEPHISTOPHILIS

*Lucifer.* Christ cannot save thy soul, for he is just:
There's none but I have interest in the same.

*Faust.* O, who art thou that look'st so terrible?

*Luc.* I am Lucifer,
And this is my companion-prince in hell.

*Faust.* O, Faustus, they are come to fetch away thy soul!

*Luc.* We come to tell thee thou dost injure us;
Thou talk'st of Christ, contrary to thy promise:
Thou shouldst not think of God: think of the devil,
And of his dam too.

*Faust.* Nor will I henceforth: pardon me in this,
And Faustus vows never to look to heaven,
Never to name God, or to pray to Him,
To burn his Scriptures, slay his ministers,
And make my spirits pull his churches down.

*Luc.* Do so, and we will highly gratify thee.
Faustus, we are come from hell to show thee some pastime: sit down, and thou shalt see all the Seven Deadly Sins appear in their proper shapes.

*Faust.* That sight will be as pleasing unto me,
As Paradise was to Adam, the first day
Of his creation.

*Luc.* Talk not of Paradise nor creation; but mark this show: talk of the devil, and nothing else.—Come away!

*Enter the* Seven Deadly Sins

Now, Faustus, examine them of their several names and dispositions.

*Faust.* What art thou, the first?

*Pride.* I am Pride. I disdain to have any parents. But, fie, what a scent is here! I'll not speak another word, except the ground were perfumed, and covered with cloth of arras.

*Faust.* What art thou, the second?

*Covetousness.* I am Covetousness, begotten of an old churl, in an old leathern bag: and, might I have my wish, I would desire that this house and all the people in it were turned to gold, that I might lock you up in my good chest: O, my sweet gold!

---

[1] intelligentia: intelligence; intellect.

[2] Per . . . totius: "Because of the unequal motion in respect to the whole."

*Faust.* What art thou, the third?

*Wrath.* I am Wrath. I had neither father nor mother: I leapt out of a lion's mouth when I was scarce half an hour old; and ever since I have run up and down the world with this case of rapiers, wounding myself when I had nobody to fight withal. I was born in hell; and look to it, for some of you shall be my father.

*Faust.* What art thou, the fourth?

*Envy.* I am Envy, begotten of a chimney-sweeper and an oyster-wife. I cannot read, and therefore wish all books were burnt. I am lean with seeing others eat. O, that there would come a famine through all the world, that all might die, and I live alone! then thou shouldst see how fat I would be. But must thou sit, and I stand? come down, with a vengeance!

*Faust.* Away, envious rascal!—What art thou, the fifth?

*Gluttony.* Who, I, sir? I am Gluttony. My parents are all dead, and the devil a penny they have left me, but a bare pension, and that is thirty meals a day, and ten bevers,[1]—a small trifle to suffice nature. O, I come of a royal parentage! my grandfather was a Gammon of Bacon, my grandmother a Hogshead of Claret-wine; my godfathers were these, Peter Pickle-herring and Martin Martlemas-beef; O, but my godmother, she was a jolly gentlewoman, and well-beloved in every good town and city; her name was Mistress Margery March-beer. Now, Faustus, thou hast heard all my progeny; wilt thou bid me to supper?

*Faust.* No, I'll see thee hanged: thou wilt eat up all my victuals.

*Glut.* Then the devil choke thee!

*Faust.* Choke thyself, glutton!—What art thou, the sixth?

*Sloth.* I am Sloth. I was begotten on a sunny bank, where I have lain ever since; and you have done me great injury to bring me from thence: let me be carried thither again by Gluttony and Lechery. I'll not speak another word for a king's ransom.

*Faust.* What are you, Mistress Minx, the seventh and last?

*Lechery.* Who, I, sir? I am one that loves an inch of raw mutton better than an ell of fried stock-fish; and the first letter of my name begins with L.[2]

*Faust.* Away, to hell, to hell!
[*Exeunt the* Sins

*Luc.* Now, Faustus, how dost thou like this?

*Faust.* O, this feeds my soul!

*Luc.* Tut, Faustus, in hell is all manner of delight.

*Faust.* O, might I see hell, and return again,
How happy were I then!

*Luc.* Thou shalt; I will send for thee at midnight.
In meantime take this book; peruse it thoroughly,
And thou shalt turn thyself into what shape thou wilt.

*Faust.* Great thanks, mighty Lucifer!
This will I keep as chary as my life.

*Luc.* Farewell, Faustus, and think on the devil.

*Faust.* Farewell, great Lucifer.
[*Exeunt* LUCIFER *and* BELZEBUB
Come, Mephistophilis. [*Exeunt*

*Enter* CHORUS

*Cho.* Learned Faustus,
To know the secrets of astronomy
Graven in the book of Jove's high firmament,
Did mount himself to scale Olympus' top,
Being seated in a chariot burning bright,
Drawn by the strength of yoky dragons' necks
He now is gone to prove cosmography,
And, as I guess, will first arrive in Rome,
To see the Pope and manner of his court,
And take some part of holy Peter's feast,
That to this day is highly solemnis'd.
[*Exit*

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[1] bevers: luncheons.

[2] L: *Lust* who prefers meat to fish in Lent.

## Scene VII

*The Pope's Privy-Chamber*

*Enter* Faustus *and* Mephistophilis

*Faust.* Having now, my good Mephistophilis,
Pass'd with delight the stately town of Trier,[1]
Environ'd round with airy mountain-tops,
With walls of flint, and deep-entrenched lakes,
Not to be won by any conquering prince;
From Paris next, coasting the realm of France,
We saw the river Maine fall into Rhine,
Whose banks are set with groves of fruitful vines;
Then up to Naples, rich Campania,
Whose buildings fair and gorgeous to the eye,
The streets straight forth, and pav'd with finest brick,
Quarter the town in four equivalents:
There saw we learned Maro's[2] golden tomb,
The way he cut, an English mile in length,
Thorough a rock of stone, in one night's space;
From thence to Venice, Padua, and the rest,
In one of which a sumptuous temple[3] stands,
That threats the stars with her aspiring top.
Thus hitherto hath Faustus spent his time:
But tell me now what resting-place is this?
Hast thou, as erst I did command,
Conducted me within the walls of Rome?

*Meph.* Faustus, I have; and, because we will not be unprovided, I have taken up his Holiness' privy-chamber for our use.

*Faust.* I hope his Holiness will bid us welcome.

*Meph.* Tut, 'tis no matter, man; we'll be bold with his good cheer.
And now, my Faustus, that thou mayst perceive
What Rome containeth to delight thee with,
Know that this city stands upon seven hills
That underprop the groundwork of the same:
Just through the midst runs flowing Tiber's stream
With winding banks that cut it in two parts;
Over the which four stately bridges lean,
That make safe passage to each part of Rome:
Upon the bridge call'd Ponte Angelo
Erected is a castle passing strong,
Within whose walls such store of ordnance are,
And double cannons fram'd of carved brass,
As match the days within one complete year;
Besides the gates, and high pyramides,
Which Julius Caesar brought from Africa.

*Faust.* Now, by the kingdoms of infernal rule,
Of Styx, of Acheron, and the fiery lake
Of ever-burning Phlegethon,[4] I swear
That I do long to see the monuments
And situation of bright-splendent Rome:
Come, therefore, let's away.

*Meph.* Nay, Faustus, stay: I know you'd fain see the Pope
And take some part of holy Peter's feast,
Where thou shalt see a troop of bald-pate friars,
Whose *summum bonum*[5] is in belly-cheer.

*Faust.* Well, I'm content to compass then some sport,
And by their folly make us merriment.
Then charm me, that I
May be invisible, to do what I please,
Unseen of any whilst I stay in Rome.

Mephistophilis *charms him.*

*Meph.* So, Faustus; now
Do what thou wilt, thou shalt not be discern'd.

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[1] Trier: Trèves, a famous Roman city of Germany.

[2] Maro's: Vergil, who was considered a magician in mediæval necromancy.

[3] sumptuous temple: St. Mark's Church at Venice.

[4] Styx, . . . Acheron, . . . Phlegethon: rivers in Hades.

[5] summum bonum: chief delight.

*Sound a Sonnet.*[1] *Enter the* POPE *and the* CARDINAL OF LORRAIN *to the banquet, with* FRIARS *attending*

*Pope.* My lord of Lorrain, will't please you draw near?

*Faust.* Fall to, and the devil choke you, an you spare!

*Pope.* How now! who's that which spake?—Friars, look about.

*1st Friar.* Here's nobody, if it like your Holiness.

*Pope.* My lord, here is a dainty dish was sent me from the Bishop of Milan.

*Faust.* I thank you, sir.

*Snatches the dish.*

*Pope.* How now! who's that which snatched the meat from me? will no man look?—My lord, this dish was sent me from the Cardinal of Florence.

*Faust.* You say true; I'll ha't.

*Snatches the dish.*

*Pope.* What, again!—My lord, I'll drink to your grace.

*Faust.* I'll pledge your grace.

*Snatches the cup.*

*Cardinal of Lorraine.* My lord, it may be some ghost, newly crept out of Purgatory, come to beg a pardon of your Holiness.

*Pope.* It may be so.—Friars, prepare a dirge to lay the fury of this ghost.—Once again, my lord, fall to.

*The* POPE *crosses himself.*

*Faust.* What, are you crossing of yourself?
Well, use that trick no more, I would advise you.
[*The* POPE *crosses himself again.*]
Well, there's the second time. Aware the third;
I give you fair warning.
[*The* POPE *crosses himself again, and* FAUSTUS *hits him a box of the ear; and they all run away.*]
Come on, Mephistophilis; what shall we do?

*Meph.* Nay, I know not: we shall be cursed with bell, book, and candle.

*Faust.* How! bell, book, and candle,—candle, book, and bell,—
Forward and backward, to curse Faustus to hell!
Anon you shall hear a hog grunt, a calf bleat, and an ass bray,
Because it is Saint Peter's holiday.

*Re-enter all the* FRIARS *to sing the Dirge*

*1st Friar.* Come, brethren, let's about our business with good devotion.

*They sing.*

Cursed be he that stole away his Holiness' meat from the table! *maledicat Dominus!*[2]
Cursed be he that struck his Holiness a blow on the face! *maledicat Dominus!*
Cursed be he that took Friar Sandelo a blow on the pate! *maledicat Dominus!*
Cursed be he that disturbeth our holy dirge! *maledicat Dominus!*
Cursed be he that took away his Holiness' wine! *maledicat Dominus!*
*Et omnes Sancti!*[3] *Amen!*

[MEPHISTOPHILIS *and* FAUSTUS *beat the* FRIARS, *and fling fireworks among them; and so exeunt*

*Enter* CHORUS

*Cho.* When Faustus had with pleasure ta'en the view
Of rarest things, and royal courts of kings,
He stay'd his course, and so returned home;
Where such as bear his absence but with grief,
I mean his friends and near'st companions,
Did gratulate his safety with kind words,
And in their conference of what befell,
Touching his journey through the world and air,
They put forth questions of astrology,
Which Faustus answer'd with such learned skill
As they admir'd and wonder'd at his wit.
Now is his fame spread forth in every land:

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[1] Sonnet: a particular set of notes on the trumpet or cornet (a sennet).

[2] maledicat Dominus! "Accursed be he of the Lord!"

[3] Et . . . Sancti! "And of all the Saints!"

Amongst the rest the Emperor is one,
Carolus the Fifth,[1] at whose palace now
Faustus is feasted 'mongst his noblemen.
What there he did, in trial of his art,
I leave untold; your eyes shall see ['t]
perform'd. [*Exit*

## SCENE VIII

*An Inn-Yard*

*Enter* ROBIN *the Ostler, with a book in his hand*

*Robin.* O, this is admirable! here I ha' stolen one of Doctor Faustus' conjuring books, and, i'faith, I mean to search some circles for my own use. Now will I make all the maidens in our parish dance at my pleasure.

*Enter* RALPH, *calling* ROBIN

*Ralph.* Robin, prithee, come away; there's a gentleman tarries to have his horse, and he would have his things rubbed and made clean: he keeps such a chafing with my mistress about it; and she has set me to look thee out; prithee, come away.

*Robin.* Keep out, keep out, or else you are blown up, you are dismembered, Ralph: keep out, for I am about a roaring piece of work.

*Ralph.* Come, what doest thou with that same book? thou canst not read?

*Robin.* Yes, my master and mistress shall find that I can read, or else my art fails.

*Ralph.* Why, Robin, what book is that?

*Robin.* What book! why, the most intolerable book for conjuring that e'er was invented by any brimstone devil.

*Ralph.* Canst thou conjure with it?

*Robin.* I can do all these things easily with it; first, I can make thee drunk with ippocras[2] at any tavern in Europe for nothing; that's one of my conjuring works.

*Ralph.* Our Master Parson says that's nothing.

*Robin.* No more, sweet Ralph: let's go and make clean our boots, which lie foul upon our hands, and then to our conjuring in the devil's name.

[*Exeunt*

## SCENE IX[3]

*Enter* ROBIN *and* RALPH *with a silver goblet*

*Robin.* Come, Ralph: did not I tell thee, we were for ever made by this Doctor Faustus' book? *ecce, signum!*[4] here's a simple purchase[5] for horse-keepers: our horses shall eat no hay as long as this lasts.

*Ralph.* But, Robin, here comes the Vintner.

*Robin.* Hush! I'll gull him supernaturally.

*Enter* VINTNER

Drawer, I hope all is paid; God be with you!—Come, Ralph.

*Vintner.* Soft, sir; a word with you. I must yet have a goblet paid from you, ere you go.

*Robin.* I a goblet, Ralph, I a goblet!—I scorn you; and you are but a, etc.[6] I a goblet! search me.

*Vint.* I mean so, sir, with your favour. *Searches* ROBIN.

*Robin.* How say you now?

*Vint.* I must say somewhat to your fellow. - You, sir!

*Robin.* Me, sir! me, sir! search your fill. [VINTNER *searches him.*] Now, sir, you may be ashamed to burden honest men with a matter of truth.

*Vint.* Well, one of you hath this goblet about you.

*Robin.* You lie, drawer, 'tis afore me [*Aside.*]—Sirrah you, I'll teach you to impeach honest men;—stand by;—I'll scour you for a goblet;—stand aside you had best, I charge you in the name of Belzebub. [*Aside to* RALPH.]—Look to the goblet, Ralph.

*Vint.* What mean you, sirrah?

*Robin.* I'll tell you what I mean. [*Reads from a book.*] *Sanctobulorum Periphrasticon*—nay, I'll tickle you, Vintner. [*Aside to* RALPH.]—Look to the goblet, Ralph.—[*Reads.*] *Polypragmos Belseborams framanto pacostiphos tostu, Mephistophilis, etc.*[1]

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[1] **Carolus the Fifth:** Charles V, 1519–56.

[2] **ippocras:** spiced wine.

[3] A scene is apparently missing between the end of Scene VIII and the beginning of Scene IX—DYCE.

[4] **ecce, signum!** behold the Sign!

[5] **simple purchase:** a clear gain.

[6] The actor filled in the line extempore.

*Enter* Mephistophilis, *sets squibs at their backs, and then exit. They run about*

*Vint.* *O, nomine Domini!*[2] what meanest thou, Robin? thou hast no goblet.

*Ralph.* *Peccatum peccatorum!*[3]—Here's thy goblet, good Vintner.

[*Gives the goblet to* Vintner, *who exit*

*Robin.* *Misericordia pro nobis!*[4] what shall I do? Good devil, forgive me now, and I'll never rob thy library more.

*Re-enter* Mephistophilis

*Meph.* Monarch of hell, under whose black survey
Great potentates do kneel with awful fear,
Upon whose altars thousand souls do lie,
How am I vexed with these villains' charms?
From Constantinople am I hither come,
Only for pleasure of these damned slaves.

*Robin.* How, from Constantinople! you have had a great journey: will you take sixpence in your purse to pay for your supper, and be gone?

*Meph.* Well, villains, for your presumption, I transform thee into an ape, and thee into a dog; and so be gone! [*Exit*

*Robin.* How, into an ape! that's brave: I'll have fine sport with the boys; I'll get nuts and apples enow.

*Ralph.* And I must be a dog.

*Robin.* I'faith, thy head will never be out of the pottage-pot. [*Exeunt*

## Scene X

*An Apartment in the Emperor's Palace*

*Enter* Emperor, Faustus, *and a* Knight, *with* Attendants

*Emperor.* Master Doctor Faustus, I have heard strange report of thy knowledge in the black art, how that none in my empire nor in the whole world can compare with thee for the rare effects of magic: they say thou hast a familiar spirit, by whom thou canst accomplish what thou list. This, therefore, is my request, that thou let me see some proof of thy skill, that mine eyes may be witnesses to confirm what mine ears have heard reported: and here I swear to thee, by the honour of mine imperial crown, that, whatever thou doest, thou shalt be no ways prejudiced or endamaged.

*Knight* [*aside*]. I'faith, he looks much like a conjurer.

*Faust.* My gracious sovereign, though I must confess myself far inferior to the report men have published, and nothing answerable to the honour of your imperial majesty, yet, for that love and duty binds me thereunto, I am content to do whatsoever your majesty shall command me.

*Emp.* Then, Doctor Faustus, mark what I shall say.
As I was sometime solitary set
Within my closet, sundry thoughts arose
About the honour of mine ancestors,
How they had won by prowess such exploits,
Got such riches, subdu'd so many kingdoms,
As we that do succeed, or they that shall
Hereafter possess our throne, shall
(I fear me) ne'er attain to that degree
Of high renown and great authority:
Amongst which kings is Alexander the Great,
Chief spectacle of the world's pre-eminence,
The bright shining of whose glorious acts
Lightens the world with his reflecting beams,
As when I hear but motion made of him,
It grieves my soul I never saw the man:
If, therefore, thou, by cunning of thine art,
Canst raise this man from hollow vaults below,
Where lies entomb'd this famous conqueror,
And bring with him his beauteous paramour,

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[1] Polypragmos . . . etc. This is gibberish that sounds enough like Latin and Greek to impress the Vintner.

[2] O . . . Domini! O, in the name of the Lord!

[3] Peccatum peccatorum: Sin of sins.

[4] Misericordia pro nobis! Mercy upon us!

Both in their right shapes, gesture, and attire
They us'd to wear during their time of life,
Thou shalt both satisfy my just desire,
And give me cause to praise thee whilst I live.

*Faust.* My gracious lord, I am ready to accomplish your request, so far forth as by art and power of my spirit I am able to perform.

*Knight* [*aside*]. I'faith, that's just nothing at all.

*Faust.* But, if it like your grace, it is not in my ability to present before your eyes the true substantial bodies of those two deceased princes, which long since are consumed to dust.

*Knight* [*aside*]. Ay, marry, Master Doctor, now there's a sign of grace in you, when you will confess the truth.

*Faust.* But such spirits as can lively resemble Alexander and his paramour shall appear before your grace, in that manner that they both lived in, in their most flourishing estate; which I doubt not shall sufficiently content your imperial majesty.

*Emp.* Go to, Master Doctor; let me see them presently.

*Knight.* Do you hear, Master Doctor? you bring Alexander and his paramour before the Emperor!

*Faust.* How then, sir?

*Knight.* I'faith, that's as true as Diana turned me to a stag.

*Faust.* Mephistophilis, be gone.

[*Exit* MEPHISTOPHILIS

*Knight.* Nay, an you go to conjuring, I'll be gone.

[*Exit*

*Faust.* I'll meet with you anon for interrupting me so.—Here they are, my gracious lord.

*Re-enter* MEPHISTOPHILIS *with* SPIRITS *in the shapes of* ALEXANDER *and his* PARAMOUR

*Emp.* Master Doctor, I heard this lady, while she lived, had a wart or mole in her neck: how shall I know whether it be so or no?

*Faust.* Your highness may boldly go and see.

*Emp.* Sure, these are no spirits, but the true substantial bodies of those two deceased princes.

[*Exeunt* SPIRITS

*Faust.* Wilt please your highness now to send for the knight that was so pleasant with me here of late?

*Emp.* One of you call him forth.

[*Exit* ATTENDANT

*Re-enter the* KNIGHT *with a pair of horns on his head*

How now, sir knight! Feel on thy head.

*Knight.* Thou damned wretch and execrable dog,
Bred in the concave of some monstrous rock,
How dar'st thou thus abuse a gentleman?
Villain, I say, undo what thou hast done!

*Faust.* O, not so fast, sir! there's no haste: but, good, are you remembered how you crossed me in my conference with the Emperor? I think I have met with you for it.

*Emp.* Good Master Doctor, at my entreaty release him: he hath done penance sufficient.

*Faust.* My gracious lord, not so much for the injury he offered me here in your presence, as to delight you with some mirth, hath Faustus worthily requited this injurious knight; which being all I desire, I am content to release him of his horns:—and, sir knight, hereafter speak well of scholars.—Mephistophilis, transform him straight. [MEPHISTOPHILIS *removes the horns.*]—Now, my good lord, having done my duty, I humbly take my leave.

*Emp.* Farewell, Master Doctor: yet, ere you go,
Expect from me a bounteous reward.

[*Exeunt* EMPEROR, KNIGHT, *and* ATTENDANTS

## SCENE XI

*A Fair and Pleasant Green*

*Faust.* Now, Mephistophilis, the restless course
That time doth run with calm and silent foot,
Shortening my days and thread of vital life,

Calls for the payment of my latest years:
Therefore, sweet Mephistophilis, let us
Make haste to Wertenberg.

*Meph.* What, will you go on horseback or on foot?

*Faust.* Nay, till I'm past this fair and pleasant green, I'll walk on foot.

## SCENE XII

*In or near the Home of Faustus*

*Enter a* HORSE-COURSER[1]

*Horse-Courser.* I have been all this day seeking one Master Fustian: mass, see where he is!—God save you Master Doctor!

*Faust.* What, Horse-Courser! you are well met.

*Horse-C.* Do you hear, sir? I have brought you forty dollars for your horse.

*Faust.* I cannot sell him so: if thou likest him for fifty, take him.

*Horse-C.* Alas, sir, I have no more!—I pray you, speak for me.

*Meph.* I pray you, let him have him: he is an honest fellow, and he has a great charge, neither wife nor child.

*Faust.* Well, come, give me your money [HORSE-COURSER *gives* FAUSTUS *the money.*]: my boy will deliver him to you. But I must tell you one thing before you have him; ride him not into the water, at any hand.

*Horse-C.* Why, sir, will he not drink of all waters?

*Faust.* O, yes, he will drink of all waters; but ride him not into the water; ride him over hedge or ditch, or where thou wilt, but not into the water.

*Horse-C.* Well, sir.—Now am I made man for ever: I'll not leave my horse for forty: if he had but the quality of hey-ding-ding, hey-ding-ding, I'd make a brave living on him: he has a buttock as slick as an eel [*Aside.*]—Well, God b'wi'-ye, sir: your boy will deliver him me: but, hark you, sir; if my horse be sick or ill at ease, you'll tell me what it is?

*Faust.* Away, you villain! what, dost think I am a horse-doctor?

[*Exit* HORSE-COURSER

What art thou, Faustus, but a man condemn'd to die?
Thy fatal time doth draw to final end;
Despair doth drive distrust into my thoughts:
Confound these passions with a quiet sleep:
Tush, Christ did call the thief upon the Cross;
Then rest thee, Faustus, quiet in conceit. [*Sleeps in his chair*

*Re-enter* HORSE-COURSER, *all wet, crying*

*Horse-C.* Alas, alas! Doctor Fustian, quotha? mass, Doctor Lopus[2] was never such a doctor: has given me a purgation, has purged me of forty dollars; I shall never see them more. But yet, like an ass as I was, I would not be ruled by him, for he bade me I should ride him into no water: now I, thinking my horse had had some rare quality that he would not have had me know of, I, like a venturous youth, rid him into the deep pond at the town's end. I was no sooner in the middle of the pond, but my horse vanished away, and I sat upon a bottle[3] of hay, never so near drowning in my life. But I'll seek out my doctor, and have my forty dollars again, or I'll make it the dearest horse!—O, yonder is his snipper-snapper. Do you hear? you, hey-pass, where's your master?

*Meph.* Why, sir, what would you? you cannot speak with him.

*Horse-C.* But I will speak with him.

*Meph.* Why, he's fast asleep: come some other time.

*Horse-C.* I'll speak with him now, or I'll break his glass-windows[4] about his ears.

*Meph.* I tell thee, he has not slept this eight nights.

*Horse-C.* An he have not slept this eight weeks, I'll speak with him.

*Meph.* See, where he is, fast asleep.

*Horse-C.* Ay, this is he.—God save you, Master Doctor, Master Doctor, Master Doctor Fustian! forty dollars, forty dollars for a bottle of hay!

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[1] Horse-Courser: a tricky horse-dealer.

[2] Doctor Lopus: Queen Elizabeth's physician, Dr. Lopez. He was put to death for having received a bribe from the Court of Spain to destroy her.

[3] bottle: bundle.

[4] glass-windows: spectacles.

*Meph.* Why, thou seest he hears thee not.

*Horse-C.* So-ho, ho! So-ho, ho! [*Hollas in his ear.*] No, will you not wake? I'll make you wake ere I go. [*Pulls* FAUSTUS *by the leg, and pulls it away.*] Alas, I am undone! what shall I do?

*Faust.* O, my leg, my leg!—Help, Mephistophilis! call the officers.—My leg, my leg!

*Meph.* Come, villain, to the constable.

*Horse-C.* O Lord, sir, let me go, and I'll give you forty dollars more!

*Meph.* Where be they?

*Horse-C.* I have none about me: come to my ostry,[1] and I'll give them you.

*Meph.* Be gone quickly.

[HORSE-COURSER *runs away*

*Faust.* What, is he gone? farewell he! Faustus has his leg again, and the Horse-Courser, I take it, a bottle of hay for his labour: well, this trick shall cost him forty dollars more.

*Enter* WAGNER

How now, Wagner! what's the news with thee?

*Wag.* Sir, the Duke of Vanholt doth earnestly entreat your company.

*Faust.* The Duke of Vanholt! an honourable gentleman, to whom I must be no niggard of my cunning.—Come, Mephistophilis, let's away to him.

[*Exeunt*

## SCENE XIII

### *The Court of the Duke of Vanholt*

*Enter the* DUKE OF VANHOLT, *the* DUCHESS, *and* FAUSTUS

*Duke.* Believe me, Master Doctor, this merriment hath much pleased me.

*Faust.* My gracious lord, I am glad it contents you so well.—But it may be, madam, you take no delight in this. I have heard that women do long for some dainties or other: what is it, madam? tell me, and you shall have it.

*Duchess.* Thanks, good Master Doctor: and, for I see your courteous intent to pleasure me, I will not hide from you the thing my heart desires; and, were it now summer, as it is January and the dead time of the winter, I would desire no better meat than a dish of ripe grapes.

*Faust.* Alas, madam, that's nothing!—Mephistophilis, be gone. [*Exit* MEPHISTOPHILIS.] Were it a greater thing than this, so it would content you, you should have it.

*Re-enter* MEPHISTOPHILIS *with grapes*

Here they be, madam: wilt please you taste on them?

*Duke.* Believe me, Master Doctor, this makes me wonder above the rest, that being in the dead time of winter and in the month of January, how you should come by these grapes.

*Faust.* If it like your grace, the year is divided into two circles over the whole world, that, when it is here winter with us, in the contrary circle it is summer with them, as in India, Saba,[2] and farther countries in the east; and by means of a swift spirit that I have, I had them brought hither, as you see.—How do you like them, madam? be they good?

*Duchess.* Believe me, Master Doctor, they be the best grapes that e'er I tasted in my life before.

*Faust.* I am glad they content you so, madam.

*Duke.* Come, madam, let us in, where you must well reward this learned man for the great kindness he hath showed to you.

*Duchess.* And so I will, my lord; and, whilst I live, rest beholding for this courtesy.

*Faust.* I humbly thank your grace.

*Duke.* Come, Master Doctor, follow us, and receive your reward.

[*Exeunt*

## SCENE XIV

### *A Room in the House of Faustus*

*Enter* WAGNER

*Wag.* I think my master means to die shortly,
For he hath given to me all his goods:
And yet, methinks, if that death were near,

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[1] ostry: hostelry; inn.

[2] Saba: Sheba.

He would not banquet, and carouse, and swill
Amongst the students, as even now he doth,
Who are at supper with such belly-cheer
As Wagner ne'er beheld in all his life.
See, where they come! belike the feast is ended. [*Exit*

*Enter* Faustus *with two or three* Scholars, *and* Mephistophilis

*1st Schol.* Master Doctor Faustus, since our conference about fair ladies, which was the beautifulest in all the world, we have determined with ourselves that Helen of Greece was the admirablest lady that ever lived: therefore, Master Doctor, if you will do us that favour, as to let us see that peerless dame of Greece, whom all the world admires for majesty, we should think ourselves much beholding unto you.

*Faust.* Gentlemen,
For that I know your friendship is unfeign'd,
And Faustus' custom is not to deny
The just requests of those that wish him well
You shall behold that peerless dame of Greece,
No otherways for pomp and majesty
Than when Sir Paris cross'd the seas with her,
And brought the spoils to rich Dardania.[1]
Be silent, then, for danger is in words.

*Music sounds, and* Helen *passeth over the stage.*

*2nd Schol.* Too simple is my wit to tell her praise,
Whom all the world admires for majesty.

*3rd Schol.* No marvel though the angry Greeks pursu'd
With ten years' war the rape of such a queen,
Whose heavenly beauty passeth all compare.

*1st Schol.* Since we have seen the pride of Nature's works,
And only paragon of excellence,
Let us depart; and for this glorious deed
Happy and blest be Faustus evermore!

*Faust.* Gentlemen, farewell: the same I wish to you. [*Exeunt* Scholars

*Enter an* Old Man

*Old Man.* Ah, Doctor Faustus, that I might prevail
To guide thy steps unto the way of life,
By which sweet path thou mayst attain the goal
That shall conduct thee to celestial rest!
Break heart, drop blood, and mingle it with tears,
Tears falling from repentant heaviness
Of thy most vile and loathsome filthiness,
The stench whereof corrupts the inward soul
With such flagitious crimes of heinous sin
As no commiseration may expel,
But mercy, Faustus, of thy Saviour sweet,
Whose blood alone must wash away thy guilt.

*Faust.* Where art thou, Faustus? wretch, what hast thou done?
Damn'd art thou, Faustus, damn'd; despair and die!
Hell calls for right, and with a roaring voice
Says, "Faustus, come; thine hour is almost come;"
And Faustus now will come to do thee right.

Mephistophilis *gives him a dagger.*

*Old Man.* Ah, stay, good Faustus, stay thy desperate steps!
I see an angel hovers o'er thy head,
And, with a vial full of precious grace,
Offers to pour the same into thy soul:
Then call for mercy, and avoid despair.

*Faust.* Ah, my sweet friend, I feel
Thy words to comfort my distressed soul!
Leave me a while to ponder on my sins.

*Old Man.* I go, sweet Faustus; but with heavy cheer,
Fearing the ruin of thy hopeless soul. [*Exit*

*Faust.* Accursed Faustus, where is mercy now?
I do repent; and yet I do despair:
Hell strives with grace for conquest in my breast:
What shall I do to shun the snares of death?

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[1] Dardania: Troy.

*Meph.* Thou traitor, Faustus, I arrest thy soul
For disobedience to my sovereign lord:
Revolt, or I'll in piece-meal tear thy flesh.
*Faust.* Sweet Mephistophilis, entreat thy lord
To pardon my unjust presumption,
And with my blood again I will confirm
My former vow I made to Lucifer.
*Meph.* Do it, then, quickly, with unfeigned heart,
Lest greater danger do attend thy drift.[1]
*Faust.* Torment, sweet friend, that base and crooked age,
That durst dissuade me from thy Lucifer,
With greatest torments that our hell affords.
*Meph.* His faith is great; I cannot touch his soul;
But what I may afflict his body with
I will attempt, which is but little worth.
*Faust.* One thing, good servant, let me crave of thee,
To glut the longing of my heart's desire,
That I might have unto my paramour
That heavenly Helen which I saw of late,
Whose sweet embracings may extinguish clean
Those thoughts that do dissuade me from my vow,
And keep mine oath I made to Lucifer.
*Meph.* Faustus, this, or what else thou shalt desire,
Shall be perform'd in twinkling of an eye.

*Re-enter* HELEN

*Faust.* Was this the face that launch'd a thousand ships,
And burnt the topless towers of Ilium?—
Sweet Helen, make me immortal with a kiss.—
[*Kisses her.*]
Her lips suck forth my soul: see, where it flies!—
Come, Helen, come, give me my soul again.
Here will I dwell, for heaven is in these lips,
And all is dross that is not Helena.
I will be Paris, and for love of thee,
Instead of Troy, shall Wertenberg be sack'd;
And I will combat with weak Menelaus,
And wear thy colours on my plumed crest;
Yes, I will wound Achilles in the heel,
And then return to Helen for a kiss.
O, thou art fairer than the evening air
Clad in the beauty of a thousand stars;
Brighter art thou than flaming Jupiter
When he appear'd to hapless Semele;
More lovely than the monarch of the sky
In wanton Arethusa's azur'd arms;
And none but thou shalt be my paramour! [*Exeunt*

## SCENE XV

*A Room in the Old Man's House*

*Enter the* OLD MAN

*Old Man.* Accursed Faustus, miserable man,
That from thy soul exclud'st the grace of heaven,
And fly'st the throne of his tribunal-seat!

*Enter* Devils

Satan begins to sift me with his pride:
As in this furnace God shall try my faith,
My faith, vile hell, shall triumph over thee,
Ambitious fiends, see how the heavens smile
At your repulse, and laugh your state to scorn!
Hence, hell! for hence I fly unto my God.
[*Exeunt—on one side,* Devils, *on the other,* OLD MAN

## SCENE XVI

*A Room in Faustus' House*

*Enter* FAUSTUS, *with* SCHOLARS

*Faust.* Ah, gentlemen!

*1st Schol.* What ails Faustus?

*Faust.* Ah, my sweet chamber-fellow, had I lived with thee, then had I lived still! but now I die eternally. Look, comes he not? comes he not?

*2nd Schol.* What means Faustus?

*3rd Schol.* Belike he is grown into some sickness by being over-solitary.

*1st Schol.* If it be so, we'll have physicians to cure him.—'Tis but a surfeit; never fear, man.

*Faust.* A surfeit of deadly sin, that hath damned both body and soul.

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[1] [Probably here Faustus stabs his arm and writes on a paper with his blood:—for the second time.]

*2nd Schol.* Yet, Faustus, look up to heaven; remember God's mercies are infinite.

*Faust.* But Faustus' offence can ne'er be pardoned: the serpent that tempted Eve may be saved, but not Faustus. Ah, gentlemen, hear me with patience, and tremble not at my speeches! Though my heart pants and quivers to remember that I have been a student here these thirty years, O, would I had never seen Wertenberg, never read book! and what wonders I have done, all Germany can witness, yea, all the world; for which Faustus hath lost both Germany and the world, yea, heaven itself, heaven, the seat of God, the throne of the blessed, the kingdom of joy; and must remain in hell for ever, hell, ah, hell, for ever! Sweet friends, what shall become of Faustus, being in hell for ever?

*3rd Schol.* Yet, Faustus, call on God.

*Faust.* On God, whom Faustus hath abjured! on God, whom Faustus hath blasphemed! Ah, my God, I would weep! but the devil draws in my tears. Gush forth blood, instead of tears! yea, life and soul! O, he stays my tongue! I would lift up my hands; but see, they hold them, they hold them!

*All.* Who, Faustus?

*Faust.* Lucifer and Mephistophilis. Ah, gentlemen, I gave them my soul for my cunning!

*All.* God forbid!

*Faust.* God forbade it, indeed; but Faustus hath done it: for vain pleasure of twenty-four years hath Faustus lost eternal joy and felicity. I writ them a bill[1] with mine own blood: the date is expired; the time will come, and he will fetch me.

*1st Schol.* Why did not Faustus tell us of this before, that divines might have prayed for thee?

*Faust.* Oft have I thought to have done so; but the devil threatened to tear me in pieces, if I named God, to fetch both body and soul, if I once gave ear to divinity: and now 'tis too late. Gentlemen, away, lest you perish with me.

*2nd Schol.* O, what shall we do to save Faustus?

*Faust.* Talk not of me, but save yourselves, and depart.

*3rd Schol.* God will strengthen me; I will stay with Faustus.

*1st Schol.* Tempt not God, sweet friend; but let us into the next room, and there pray for him.

*Faust.* Ay, pray for me, pray for me; and what noise soever ye hear, come not unto me, for nothing can rescue me.

*2nd Schol.* Pray thou, and we will pray that God may have mercy upon thee.

*Faust.* Gentlemen, farewell: if I live till morning, I'll visit you; if not, Faustus is gone to hell.

*All.* Faustus, farewell.

[*Exeunt* SCHOLARS.—*The clock strikes eleven*

*Faust.* Ah, Faustus.
Now hast thou but one bare hour to live,
And then thou must be damn'd perpetually!
Stand still, you ever-moving spheres of heaven,
That time may cease, and midnight never come;
Fair Nature's eye, rise, rise again, and make
Perpetual day; or let this hour be but
A year, a month, a week, a natural day,
That Faustus may repent and save his soul!
*O lente, lente currite, noctis equi!*[2]
The stars move still, time runs, the clock will strike,
The devil will come, and Faustus must be damn'd.
O, I'll leap up to my God!—Who pulls me down?—
See, see, where Christ's blood streams in the firmament!
One drop would save my soul, half a drop: ah, my Christ!—
Ah, rend not my heart for naming of my Christ!
Yet will I call on him: O, spare me, Lucifer!—
Where is it now? 'tis gone: and see, where God
Stretcheth out his arm, and bends his ireful brows!

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[1] bill: bond.

[2] O . . . equi! "O slowly, slowly pace, ye coursers of the night!" Ovid: Amor. I: 13, 39.

Mountains and hills, come, come, and fall on me,
And hide me from the heavy wrath of God!
No, no!
Then will I headlong run into the earth:
Earth, gape! O, no, it will not harbour me!
You stars that reign'd at my nativity,
Whose influence hath allotted death and hell,
Now draw up Faustus, like a foggy mist,
Into the entrails of yon labouring clouds,
That, when you vomit forth into the air,
My limbs may issue from your smoky mouths,
So that my soul may but ascend to heaven!
[*The clock strikes the half-hour.*]
Ah, half the hour is past! 'twill all be past anon.
O God,
If thou wilt not have mercy on my soul,
Yet for Christ's sake, whose blood hath ransom'd me,
Impose some end to my incessant pain;
Let Faustus live in hell a thousand years,
A hundred thousand, and at last be sav'd!
O, no end is limited to damned souls!
Why wert thou not a creature wanting soul?
Or why is this immortal that thou hast?
Ah, Pythagoras' metempsychosis,[1] were that true,
This soul should fly from me, and I be chang'd
Unto some brutish beast! all beasts are happy,
For, when they die,
Their souls are soon dissolv'd in elements;
But mine must live still to be plagu'd in hell.
Curs'd be the parents that engender'd me!
No, Faustus, curse thyself, curse Lucifer
That hath depriv'd thee of the joys of heaven.
[*The clock strikes twelve.*]
O, it strikes, it strikes! Now, body, turn to air,
Or Lucifer will bear thee quick to hell!
[*Thunder and lightning.*]
O soul, be chang'd into little water-drops,
And fall into the ocean, ne'er be found!

*Enter* Devils

My God, my God, look not so fierce on me!
Adders and serpents, let me breathe a while!
Ugly hell, gape not! come not, Lucifer!
I'll burn my books!—Ah, Mephistophilis!
[*Exeunt* Devils *with* FAUSTUS

*Enter* CHORUS

*Cho.* Cut is the branch that might have grown full straight,
And burnèd is Apollo's laurel-bough,
That sometime grew within this learnèd man.
Faustus is gone: regard his hellish fall,
Whose fiendful fortune may exhort the wise,
Only to wonder at unlawful things,
Whose deepness doth entice such forward wits
To practise more than heavenly power permits. [*Exit*

*Terminat hora diem; terminat auctor opus.*[2]

## SHAKESPEARE

When, about 1585 or 1587, **William Shakespeare** (1564–1616) left his native Warwickshire village of Stratford-on-Avon,—tradition says in disgrace as a poacher—and appeared in London, he is first heard of in connection with the theatre. Since James Burbage and his more famous son Richard are reputed to have been Stratford men, it is natural to suppose that the young country lad sought at once his fellow townsmen. In some way he got his start, possibly by adapting old plays, and perhaps by collaborating with Marlowe. However it may have been, he soon became a recognized playwright; for by 1592 his growing fame aroused a jealous attack from one of the University Wits, Robert Greene, in his pamphlet *A Groat's-worth of Wit Bought with a Million of Repentance.*

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[1] **metempsychosis:** Pythagoras (6th century B.C.) taught the transmigration of souls.

[2] **Terminat . . . opus.** The hour concludes the day; the author concludes the work.

Shakespeare, it is believed, joined the company of which Burbage was a member, the Earl of Leicester's Servants (actors). This was the nucleus of the company which later became the Lord Chamberlain's Players, and which, after the death of Elizabeth, received the patronage of James I as the King's Men. It is an established fact that Shakespeare belonged to these last two companies. They were the actors who were called upon to present plays at court during the holiday celebrations, or upon any royal festal occasion.

That by the end of the century Shakespeare was recognized as one of the foremost men in literary London is attested by one Francis Meres, a learned divine, who in a book called *Palladis Tamia* (*Wit's Treasury*), published in 1598, lists the poems and twelve plays of Shakespeare then known. Meres calls him the "mellifluous and hony-tongued Shakespeare," and lauds him extravagantly, saying: "As Platus [*sic*] and Seneca are accounted the best for Comedy and Tragedy among the Latines; so *Shakespeare* among the English is the most excellent in both kinds for the stage"; and again: "I say that the Muses would speake with Shakespeare's fine filed phrase, if they would speake English."[1]

Other contemporary allusions show that Shakespeare was popular and honored not only by his associates but also by influential men at court. As actor, producer, theatre-owner, playwright, and poet, he became both famous and rich. In 1611–1612 he retired to Stratford to live the life of a country gentleman in the fine home, New Place, which he had bought there. There he died in 1616, and was buried in the chancel of Trinity Church at Stratford.

Shakespeare produced thirty-seven plays, on the average of two plays a year. In 1623 thirty-six of these (*Pericles* being omitted) were published in one volume by his fellow actors, John Heminge and Henry Condell, "to keepe the memory of so worthy a friend and fellow alive." This book is known as *The First Folio*, and is one of the most valuable books in the world.

Although the exact chronology of the plays is still in dispute among scholars, modern criticism has divided his work into four periods, through which can be traced the progress of his power as dramatist and artist. The dates of the periods and the chronology of the plays are approximate only.

The first period, dating from about 1591 to about 1594, was one of experiment, in which the young dramatist tried his hand at many types of plays, beginning with the rewriting of old histories in the three parts of *Henry VI* (1592–3), perhaps in collaboration with Marlowe, and his own free adaptation of Plautus in *The Comedy of Errors* (1592); and ranging from the fantastic Euphuistic comedy in favor at court, such as *Love's Labour's Lost* (1591–2) and *Two Gentlemen of Verona* (1591–2); to the tragedy of ironic fate in *Romeo and Juliet* (1592–3); and culminating in that fairy quip at mortal fools, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1594–5). Of the histories, three others were probably written by 1594: namely, *Richard III* (1593), *Richard II* (1593), *King John* (1594).

In the second period, 1594–5 to 1599–1600, Shakespeare produced his finest English historical dramas, *Henry IV*, Parts I and II (1597), and *Henry V* (1598); and his romantic comedies. The latter are full of the midsummer madness of love, reaching in some of them to the brink of tragedy itself, and centre around the wit and charm of those high-bred women whom all the world knows and loves: Portia in *The Merchant of Venice* (1594 or 5); Beatrice in *Much Ado About Nothing* (1599); Rosalind in *As You Like It* (1599); Viola in *Twelfth Night* (1600).

After 1600 Shakespeare turned to the tragedy of character. This was inevitable as he grew older, and might have been due to saddening experiences in his own life. During this time he wrote the great tragedies with which his genius is most often associated: *Julius Caesar* (1600); *Hamlet* (1602); *Othello* (1604); *Macbeth* (1606); *King Lear* (1607); *Antony and Cleopatra* (1608); *Coriolanus* (1608–9).

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[1] *Wits Academy a Treasurie of Goulden Sentences Similes and Examples set forth cheefely for the benefitt of young schollers* (Edition of 1636).

The plays of the last period, in spite of some elements of bitterness and disillusionment, end in serenity and reconciliation: revenge turns into forgiveness, and tragedy into peace. The heroines are young girls. These plays—*Cymbeline* (1610), *The Winter's Tale* (1611), *The Tempest* (1611)—fall between the years 1609 and 1611. After that, until his death, he wrote only in collaboration. The one play after 1611 which is definitely known to be his is *Henry VIII*, written with John Fletcher, and produced at The Globe in 1613.

Shakespeare was the supreme product of his own age. Through his creative genius he transformed the crudities, the extravagances, the power, and the beauty of the sixteenth century plays into great drama. To be sure, his plays have all the faults of the Elizabethans, and there is evidence of hasty work. But being, like Sophocles and Molière, an actor himself and a theatrical producer, he has the dramaturgic skill of the practical playwright. To this day his plays hold any audience by their theatric technique. Yet, in addition to being a practical man of the theatre, he was a superb artist. His power of characterization, his insight into the human soul, his humor, his imagination, his philosophy, his poetry, lift him to the heights of immortal greatness. Shakespeare's plays are the high-water mark of the English drama. To read, study, and see them performed is the fortunate heritage of every well-educated man and woman.

## THE TRAGICAL HISTORY OF HAMLET, PRINCE OF DENMARK[1]

William Shakespeare

### DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

Claudius, *king of Denmark*
Hamlet, *son to the late, and nephew to the present king*
Polonius, *lord chamberlain*
Horatio, *friend to Hamlet*
Laertes, *son to Polonius*
Voltimand,
Cornelius,
Rosencrantz,
Guildenstern } *courtiers*
Osric,
A Gentleman,
A Priest
Marcellus, } *officers*
Bernardo,
Francisco, *a soldier*
Reynaldo, *servant to Polonius*
Players
Two Clowns, *grave-diggers*
Fortinbras, *prince of Norway*
A Captain
English Ambassadors

Gertrude, *queen of Denmark, and mother to Hamlet*
Ophelia, *daughter to Polonius*

Lords, Ladies, Officers, Soldiers, Sailors, Messengers, and other Attendants

Ghost of Hamlet's Father

Scene: *Denmark.*

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[1] Second Quarto, 1604.

## ACT I

### Scene I

*Elsinore. A Platform before the Castle*

Francisco *at his post. Enter to him* Bernardo

*Bernardo.* Who's there?
*Francisco.* Nay, answer me. Stand, and unfold yourself.
*Bern.* Long live the king![1]
*Fran.* Bernardo?
*Bern.* He.
*Fran.* You come most carefully upon your hour.
*Bern.* 'Tis now struck twelve; get thee to bed, Francisco.
*Fran.* For this relief much thanks: 'tis bitter cold,
And I am sick at heart.
*Bern.* Have you had quiet guard?
*Fran.* Not a mouse stirring.
*Bern.* Well, good night.
If you do meet Horatio and Marcellus,
The rivals of my watch, bid them make haste.
*Fran.* I think I hear them.—Stand, ho! Who's there?

*Enter* Horatio *and* Marcellus

*Horatio.* Friends to this ground.
*Marcellus.* And liegemen to the Dane.[2]
*Fran.* Give you good night.
*Mar.* O, farewell, honest soldier.
Who hath reliev'd you?
*Fran.* Bernardo has my place.
Give you good night. [*Exit*
*Mar.* Holla! Bernardo!
*Bern.* Say,
What, is Horatio there?
*Hor.* A piece of him.
*Bern.* Welcome, Horatio. Welcome, good Marcellus.
*Mar.* What, has this thing appear'd again to-night?
*Bern.* I have seen nothing.
*Mar.* Horatio says 'tis but our fantasy,
And will not let belief take hold of him
Touching this dreaded sight, twice seen of us:
Therefore I have entreated him along
With us to watch the minutes of this night,
That if again this apparition come,
He may approve[3] our eyes and speak to it.
*Hor.* Tush, tush, 'twill not appear.
*Bern.* Sit down awhile;
And let us once again assail your ears,
That are so fortified against our story
What we two nights have seen.
*Hor.* Well, sit we down,
And let us hear Bernardo speak of this.
*Bern.* Last night of all,
When yond same star that's westward from the pole[4]
Had made his course to illume that part of heaven
Where now it burns, Marcellus and myself,
The bell then beating one,—

*Enter* Ghost

*Mar.* Peace, break thee off. Look, where it comes again!
*Bern.* In the same figure, like the king that's dead.
*Mar.* Thou art a scholar;[5] speak to it, Horatio.
*Bern.* Looks it not like the king? Mark it, Horatio.
*Hor.* Most like; it harrows me with fear and wonder.
*Bern.* It would be spoke to.
*Mar.* Question it, Horatio.
*Hor.* What art thou that usurp'st this time of night,
Together with that fair and warlike form
In which the majesty of buried Denmark
Did sometimes march? By heaven I charge thee, speak!
*Mar.* It is offended.
*Bern.* See, it stalks away!
*Hor.* Stay! Speak, speak! I charge thee, speak! [*Exit* Ghost
*Mar.* 'Tis gone, and will not answer.
*Bern.* How now, Horatio! you tremble, and look pale.
Is not this something more than fantasy?
What think you on't?

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[1] Long . . . king! The watchword of the night.
[2] the Dane: the King.
[3] approve: test.
[4] pole: the pole star.
[5] a scholar, hence, able to address it in Latin, the language of the church.

*Hor.* Before my God, I might not this believe
Without the sensible and true avouch[1]
Of mine own eyes.
*Mar.* Is it not like the king?
*Hor.* As thou art to thyself.
Such was the very armour he had on
When he the ambitious Norway combated;
So frown'd he once, when, in an angry parle,[2]
He smote the sledded Polacks on the ice.
'Tis strange.
*Mar.* Thus twice before, and jump[3] at this dead hour,
With martial stalk hath he gone by our watch.
*Hor.* In what particular thought to work I know not;
But in the gross and scope of my opinion,
This bodes some strange eruption to our state.
*Mar.* Good now, sit down, and tell me, he that knows,
Why this same strict and most observant watch
So nightly toils[4] the subject of the land,
And why such daily cast of brazen cannon,
And foreign mart for implements of war;
Why such impress of shipwrights, whose sore task
Does not divide the Sunday from the week;
What might be toward, that this sweaty haste
Doth make the night joint-labourer with the day?
Who is't that can inform me?
*Hor.* That can I,—
At least, the whisper goes so. Our last king,
Whose image even but now appear'd to us,
Was, as you know, by Fortinbras of Norway,
Thereto prick'd on by a most emulate pride,
Dar'd to the combat; in which our valiant Hamlet—
For so this side of our known world esteem'd him—
Did slay this Fortinbras; who, by a seal'd compact,
Well ratified by law and heraldry,
Did forfeit, with his life, all those his lands
Which he stood seiz'd of,[5] to the conqueror:
Against the which, a moiety competent[6]
Was gaged[7] by our king; which had return'd
To the inheritance of Fortinbras,
Had he been vanquisher; as, by the same covenant,
And carriage[8] of the article design'd,
His fell to Hamlet. Now, sir, young Fortinbras,
Of unimproved[9] mettle hot and full,
Hath in the skirts of Norway here and there
Shark'd up[10] a list of lawless resolutes,
For food and diet, to some enterprise
That hath a stomach[11] in't; which is no other—
As it doth well appear unto our state—
But to recover of us, by strong hand
And terms compulsative, those foresaid lands
So by his father lost: and this, I take it,
Is the main motive of our preparations,
The source of this our watch and the chief head
Of this post-haste and romage[12] in the land.
*Ber.* I think it be no other but e'en so.
Well may it sort[13] that this portentous figure
Comes armed through our watch; so like the king
That was and is the question of these wars.
*Hor.* A mote it is to trouble the mind's eye.
In the most high and palmy state of Rome,

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[1] **avouch:** evidence.
[2] **parle:** parley.
[3] **jump:** just.
[4] **toils:** makes toil.
[5] **seiz'd of:** possessed of.
[6] **moiety competent:** adequate portion.
[7] **gaged:** pledged.
[8] **carriage:** purport.
[9] **unimproved:** undisciplined.
[10] **Shark'd up:** gathered hastily.
[11] **stomach:** zest.
[12] **romage:** commotion.
[13] **sort:** suit.

A little ere the mightiest Julius fell,
The graves stood tenantless, and the sheeted dead
Did squeak and gibber in the Roman streets:
As stars with trains of fire and dews of blood,
Disasters in the sun; and the moist star[1]
Upon whose influence Neptune's empire stands
Was sick almost to doomsday with eclipse:
And even the like precurse of fierce events,
As harbingers preceding still[2] the fates
And prologue to the omen coming on,
Have heaven and earth together demonstrated
Unto our climatures[3] and countrymen.—
But soft, behold! Lo, where it comes again!

*Reënter* Ghost

I'll cross it, though it blast me.—Stay, illusion!
If thou hast any sound, or use of voice,
Speak to me.
If there be any good thing to be done,
That may to thee do ease and grace to me,
Speak to me.
[*Cock crows.*]
If thou art privy to thy country's fate,
Which happily[4] foreknowing may avoid,
O, speak!
Or if thou hast uphoarded in thy life
Extorted treasure in the womb of earth
For which, they say, you spirits oft walk in death,
[*The cock crows.*]
Speak of it. Stay, and speak!—Stop it, Marcellus.

*Mar.* Shall I strike at it with my partisan?[5]
*Hor.* Do, if it will not stand.
*Bern.* 'Tis here!
*Hor.* 'Tis here!
*Mar.* 'Tis gone! [*Exit* Ghost
We do it wrong, being so majestical,
To offer it the show of violence;
For it is, as the air, invulnerable,
And our vain blows malicious mockery.
*Bern.* It was about to speak, when the cock crew.
*Hor.* And then it started like a guilty thing
Upon a fearful summons. I have heard,
The cock, that is the trumpet to the morn,
Doth with his lofty and shrill-sounding throat
Awake the god of day; and, at his warning,
Whether in sea or fire, in earth or air,
The extravagant and erring[6] spirit hies
To his confine: and of the truth herein
This present object made probation.[7]
*Mar.* It faded on the crowing of the cock.
Some say that ever 'gainst that season comes
Wherein our Saviour's birth is celebrated,
The bird of dawning singeth all night long:
And then, they say, no spirit dare stir abroad;
The nights are wholesome; then no planets strike,[8]
No fairy takes,[9] nor witch hath power to charm,
So hallow'd and so gracious is the time.
*Hor.* So have I heard, and do in part believe it.
But, look, the morn, in russet mantle clad,
Walks o'er the dew of yon high eastern hill.
Break we our watch up; and, by my advice,
Let us impart what we have seen tonight
Unto young Hamlet; for, upon my life,
This spirit, dumb to us, will speak to him.
Do you consent we shall acquaint him with it,
As needful in our loves, fitting our duty?
*Mar.* Let's do't, I pray; and I this morning know
Where we shall find him most conveniently. [*Exeunt*

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[1] moist star: the moon.
[2] still: invariably.
[3] climatures: regions.
[4] happily: perchance.
[5] partisan: halberd.
[6] erring: wandering.
[7] probation: proof.
[8] strike: exert evil influence.
[9] takes: bewitches.

### SCENE II

### *A Room of State in the Castle*

*Enter the* KING, QUEEN, HAMLET, POLONIUS, LAERTES, VOLTIMAND, CORNELIUS, Lords *and* Attendants

*King.* Though yet of Hamlet our dear brother's death
The memory be green, and that[1] it us befitted
To bear our hearts in grief and our whole kingdom
To be contracted in one brow of woe,
Yet so far hath discretion fought with nature
That we with wisest sorrow think on him,
Together with remembrance of ourselves.
Therefore our sometime sister, now our queen,
The imperial jointress of this warlike state,
Have we, as 'twere with a defeated[2] joy,—
With one auspicious[3] and one dropping eye,
With mirth in funeral and with dirge in marriage,
In equal scale weighing delight and dole,—
Taken to wife. Nor have we herein barr'd
Your better wisdoms, which have freely gone
With this affair along. For all, our thanks.
Now follows, that you know, young Fortinbras,
Holding a weak supposal[4] of our worth,
Or thinking by our late dear brother's death
Our state to be disjoint and out of frame,
Colleagued with the dream of his advantage,—
He hath not fail'd to pester us with message,
Importing the surrender of those lands
Lost by his father, with all bonds of law,
To our most valiant brother. So much for him.
Now for ourself, and for this time of meeting.
Thus much the business is: we have here writ
To Norway, uncle of young Fortinbras,
Who, impotent and bed-rid, scarcely hears
Of this his nephew's purpose,—to suppress
His further gait[5] herein; in that the levies,
The lists and full proportions, are all made
Out of his subject.[6] And we here dispatch
You, good Cornelius, and you, Voltimand,
For bearers of this greeting to old Norway;
Giving to you no further personal power
To business with the king, more than the scope
Of these dilated[7] articles allow.
Farewell, and let your haste commend your duty.

*Cornelius.* ⎱ In that and all things will
*Voltimand.* ⎰ we show our duty.

*King.* We doubt it nothing: heartily farewell.
[*Exeunt* VOLTIMAND *and* CORNELIUS
And now, Laertes, what's the news with you?
You told us of some suit; what is't, Laertes?
You cannot speak of reason to the Dane,
And lose your voice. What wouldst thou beg, Laertes,
That shall not be my offer, not thy asking?
The head is not more native to the heart,
The hand more instrumental to the mouth,
Than is the throne of Denmark to thy father.
What wouldst thou have, Laertes?

*Laertes.* Dread my lord,
Your leave and favour to return to France;
From whence though willingly I came to Denmark,

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[1] that: though.
[2] defeated: disfigured.
[3] auspicious: cheerful.
[4] supposal: opinion.
[5] gait: advance.
[6] subject: *collective noun*,—subjects.
[7] dilated: detailed.

To show my duty in your coronation,
Yet now, I must confess, that duty done,
My thoughts and wishes bend again toward France,
And bow them to your gracious leave and pardon.
*King.* Have you your father's leave? What says Polonius?
*Polonius.* He hath, my lord, wrung from me my slow[1] leave
By laboursome petition, and at last
Upon his will I seal'd my hard consent.
I do beseech you, give him leave to go.
*King.* Take thy fair hour, Laertes; time be thine,
And thy best graces spend it at thy will!
But now, my cousin[2] Hamlet, and my son,—
*Hamlet* [*aside*]. A little more than kin, and less than kind.[3]
*King.* How is it that the clouds still hang on you?
*Ham.* Not so, my lord; I am too much i' the sun.
*Queen.* Good Hamlet, cast thy nighted colour off,
And let thine eye look like a friend on Denmark.
Do not for ever with thy vailed[4] lids
Seek for thy noble father in the dust.
Thou knowst 'tis common; all that lives must die,
Passing through nature to eternity.
*Ham.* Ay, madam, it is common.
*Queen.* If it be,
Why seems it so particular with thee?
*Ham.* Seems, madam! nay, it is. I know not "seems."
'Tis not alone my inky cloak, good mother,
Nor customary suits of solemn black,
Nor windy suspiration of forc'd breath,
No, nor the fruitful river in the eye,
Nor the dejected haviour of the visage,
Together with all forms, moods, shows of grief,
That can denote me truly. These indeed seem,
For they are actions that a man might play.
But I have that within which passeth show;
These but the trappings and the suits of woe.
*King.* 'Tis sweet and commendable in your nature, Hamlet,
To give these mourning duties to your father.
But, you must know, your father lost a father;
That father lost, lost his, and the survivor bound
In filial obligation for some term
To do obsequious sorrow. But to persevere
In obstinate condolement is a course
Of impious stubbornness; 'tis unmanly grief;
It shows a will most incorrect[5] to heaven,
A heart unfortified, a mind impatient,
An understanding simple and unschool'd.
For what we know must be and is as common
As any the most vulgar thing to sense,[6]
Why should we in our peevish opposition
Take it to heart? Fie! 'tis a fault to heaven,
A fault against the dead, a fault to nature,
To reason most absurd; whose common theme
Is death of fathers, and who still hath cried,
From the first corse till he that died to-day,
"This must be so." We pray you, throw to earth
This unprevailing woe, and think of us
As of a father: for let the world take note,
You are the most immediate to our throne;
And with no less nobility of love
Than that which dearest father bears his son,
Do I impart toward you. For your intent
In going back to school in Wittenberg,[7]

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[1] **slow:** reluctant.

[2] **cousin:** used in a general sense of relative.

[3] **kind:** nature. Hamlet means the King is "more than kin" being both uncle and stepfather, and "less than nature" in his unnatural marriage. There is also a play on "kind," for there is no love lost between them.

[4] **vailed:** *avaled*, lowered. (cf. avalanche )

[5] **incorrect:** undisciplined.

[6] **any . . . sense:** anything most universal to observation.

[7] **Wittenberg:** The University of Wittenberg. See: *Dr. Faustus.*

It is most retrograde[1] to our desire;
And we beseech you, bend you to remain
Here, in the cheer and comfort of our eye,
Our chiefest courtier, cousin, and our son.
*Queen.* Let not thy mother lose her prayers, Hamlet:
I pray thee, stay with us; go not to Wittenberg.
*Ham.* I shall in all my best obey you, madam.
*King.* Why, ’tis a loving and a fair reply:
Be as ourself in Denmark.—Madam, come.
This gentle and unforc’d accord of Hamlet
Sits smiling to my heart; in grace whereof,
No jocund health that Denmark drinks to-day,
But the great cannon to the clouds shall tell,
And the king’s rouse the heavens shall bruit again,
Respeaking earthly thunder. Come away. [*Exeunt all but* HAMLET
*Ham.* O, that this too too solid flesh would melt,
Thaw, and resolve itself into a dew!
Or that the Everlasting had not fix’d
His canon ’gainst self-slaughter![2] O God! O God!
How weary, stale, flat and unprofitable
Seem to me all the uses of this world!
Fie on’t! O fie! ’Tis an unweeded garden,
That grows to seed; things rank and gross in nature
Possess it merely.[3] That it should come to this!
But two months dead; nay, not so much, not two:
So excellent a king; that was, to this,
Hyperion[4] to a satyr; so loving to my mother
That he might not beteem[5] the winds of heaven
Visit her face too roughly. Heaven and earth!
Must I remember? Why, she would hang on him,
As if increase of appetite had grown
By what it fed on: and yet, within a month—
Let me not think on’t—Frailty, thy name is woman!—
A little month, or ere those shoes were old
With which she follow’d my poor father’s body,
Like Niobe, all tears: why she, even she—
O Heaven! a beast, that wants discourse of reason,
Would have mourn’d longer—married with mine uncle,
My father’s brother, but no more like my father
Than I to Hercules. Within a month?
Ere yet the salt of most unrighteous tears
Had left the flushing in her galled eyes,
She married. O most wicked speed, to post
With such dexterity to incestuous sheets!
It is not nor it cannot come to good.
But break, my heart, for I must hold my tongue.

*Enter* HORATIO, MARCELLUS, *and* BERNARDO

*Hor.* Hail to your lordship!
*Ham.* I am glad to see you well.
Horatio,—or I do forget myself,
*Hor.* The same, my lord, and your poor servant ever.
*Ham.* Sir, my good friend; I’ll change[6] that name with you.
And what make you from Wittenberg, Horatio?—
Marcellus?
*Mar.* My good lord—
*Ham.* I am very glad to see you.—
[*To* BERNARDO.] Good even, sir.—
But what, in faith, make you from Wittenberg?
*Hor.* A truant disposition, good my lord.
*Ham.* I would not hear your enemy say so,

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[1] retrograde: counter.
[2] canon . . . self-slaughter: the sixth commandment.
[3] merely: wholly.
[4] Hyperion: Apollo.
[5] beteem: allow.
[6] change: exchange.

Nor shall you do mine ear that violence,
To make it truster of your own report
Against yourself. I know you are no truant.
But what is your affair in Elsinore?
We'll teach you to drink deep ere you depart.
*Hor.* My lord, I came to see your father's funeral.
*Ham.* I pray thee, do not mock me, fellow student;
I think it was to see my mother's wedding.
*Hor.* Indeed, my lord, it followed hard upon.
*Ham.* Thrift, thrift, Horatio! The funeral bak'd meats
Did coldly furnish forth the marriage tables.
Would I had met my dearest[1] foe in heaven
Ere ever I had seen that day, Horatio!
My father!—methinks I see my father.
*Hor.* O where, my lord?
*Ham.* In my mind's eye, Horatio.
*Hor.* I saw him once. He was a goodly king.
*Ham.* He was a man, take him for all in all,
I shall not look upon his like again.
*Hor.* My lord, I think I saw him yesternight.
*Ham.* Saw? Who?
*Hor.* My lord, the king your father.
*Ham.* The king my father!
*Hor.* Season your admiration[2] for a while
With an attent[3] ear, till I may deliver,
Upon the witness of these gentlemen,
This marvel to you.
*Ham.* For Heaven's love, let me hear.
*Hor.* Two nights together had these gentlemen,
Marcellus and Bernardo, on their watch,
In the dead vast and middle of the night,
Been thus encounter'd. A figure like your father,
Arm'd at all points exactly, cap-a-pe,[4]
Appears before them, and with solemn march
Goes slow and stately by them. Thrice he walk'd
By their oppress'd and fear-surprised eyes,
Within his truncheon's length; whilst they distill'd
Almost to jelly with the act[5] of fear,
Stand dumb and speak not to him. This to me
In dreadful secrecy impart they did,
And I with them the third night kept the watch;
Where, as they had deliver'd, both in time,
Form of the thing, each word made true and good,
The apparition comes. I knew your father:
These hands are not more like.
*Ham.* But where was this?
*Mar.* My lord, upon the platform where we watch'd.
*Ham.* Did you not speak to it?
*Hor.* My lord, I did;
But answer made it none. Yet once methought
It lifted up it[6] head and did address
Itself to motion, like as it would speak;
But even then the morning cock crew loud,
And at the sound it shrunk in haste away,
And vanish'd from our sight.
*Ham.* 'Tis very strange.
*Hor.* As I do live, my honour'd lord, 'tis true;
And we did think it writ down in our duty
To let you know of it.
*Ham.* Indeed, indeed, sirs—but this troubles me.
Hold you the watch to-night?
*Mar.*, *Bern.* We do, my lord.
*Ham.* Arm'd, say you?
*Mar.*, *Bern.* Arm'd, my lord.
*Ham.* From top to toe?
*Mar.*, *Bern.* My lord, from head to foot.
*Ham.* Then saw you not his face?

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[1] dearest: most heartfelt.
[2] season . . . admiration: moderate your wonder.
[3] attent: attentive.
[4] cap-a-pe: cap-à-pied; from head to foot.
[5] act: action.
[6] it: its; just coming into use in Shakespeare's time.

*Hor.* O, yes, my lord; he wore his beaver[1] up.
*Ham.* What, look'd he frowningly?
*Hor.* A countenance more in sorrow than in anger.
*Ham.* Pale or red?
*Hor.* Nay, very pale.
*Ham.* And fix'd his eyes upon you?
*Hor.* Most constantly.
*Ham.* I would I had been there.
*Hor.* It would have much amaz'd you.
*Ham.* Very like, very like. Stay'd it long?
*Hor.* While one with moderate haste might tell a hundred.
*Mar.* *Bern.* } Longer, longer.
*Hor.* Not when I saw't.
*Ham.* His beard was grizzled,—no?
*Hor.* It was, as I have seen it in his life,
A sable silver'd.
*Ham.* I will watch to-night;
Perchance 'twill walk again.
*Hor.* I warrant it will.
*Ham.* If it assume my noble father's person,
I'll speak to it, though hell itself should gape
And bid me hold my peace. I pray you all,
If you have hitherto conceal'd this sight,
Let it be tenable in your silence[2] still,
And whatsoever else shall hap to-night,
Give it an understanding, but no tongue.
I will requite your loves. So, fare you well.
Upon the platform, 'twixt eleven and twelve,
I'll visit you.
*All.* Our duty to your honour.
*Ham.* Your loves,[3] as mine to you. Farewell.
[*Exeunt all but* HAMLET
My father's spirit in arms! All is not well;
I doubt some foul play. Would the night were come!
Till then sit still, my soul. Foul deeds will rise,
Though all the earth o'erwhelm them, to men's eyes. [*Exit*

## SCENE III

### *A Room in the Castle*

*Enter* LAERTES *and* OPHELIA

*Laer.* My necessaries are embark'd. Farewell;
And, sister, as the winds give benefit[4]
And convoy is assistant,[5] do not sleep,
But let me hear from you.
*Ophelia.* Do you doubt that?
*Laer.* For Hamlet, and the trifling of his favour,
Hold it a fashion and a toy in blood;[6]
A violet in the youth of primy[7] nature,
Forward, not permanent, sweet, not lasting,
The perfume and suppliance of a minute;
No more.
*Oph.* No more but so?
*Laer.* Think it no more;
For nature crescent[8] does not grow alone
In thews and bulk, but, as this temple waxes,
The inward service of the mind and soul
Grows wide withal. Perhaps he loves you now,
And now no soil nor cautel[9] doth besmirch
The virtue of his will: but you must fear,
His greatness weigh'd, his will is not his own;
For he himself is subject to his birth
He may not, as unvalued persons do,
Carve[10] for himself; for on his choice depends
The safety and health of this whole state;
And therefore must his choice be circumscrib'd
Unto the voice and yielding of that body
Whereof he is the head. Then if he says he loves you,
It fits your wisdom so far to believe it
As he in his particular act and place
May give his saying deed; which is no further
Than the main voice of Denmark goes withal.

---

[1] beaver: visor.
[2] tenable . . . silence: kept silent.
[3] loves: Say rather *love* than *duty*.

[4] give benefit: the winds allow.
[5] convoy is assistant: conveyance is ready.
[6] fashion . . . blood: caprice of high spirits.
[7] primy: vernal.
[8] crescent: when growing.
[9] cautel: deceit.
[10] carve: choose.

Then weigh what loss your honour may sustain,
If with too credent ear you list his songs,
Or lose your heart, or your chaste treasure open
To his unmaster'd importunity.
Fear it, Ophelia, fear it, my dear sister,
And keep within the rear of your affection,
Out of the shot and danger of desire.
The chariest maid is prodigal enough,
If she unmask her beauty to the moon.
Virtue itself scapes not calumnious strokes.
The canker galls the infants of the spring,
Too oft before their buttons[1] be disclos'd;
And in the morn and liquid dew of youth
Contagious blastments are most imminent.
Be wary then. Best safety lies in fear:
Youth to itself rebels,[2] though none else near.
*Oph.* I shall the effect of this good lesson keep,
As watchman to my heart. But, good my brother,
Do not, as some ungracious[3] pastors do,
Show me the steep and thorny way to heaven,
Whiles, like a puff'd and reckless libertine,
Himself the primrose path of dalliance treads,
And recks not his own rede.[4]
*Laer.* O, fear me not.
I stay too long; but here my father comes.

*Enter* Polonius

A double blessing is a double grace;
Occasion smiles upon a second leave.
*Pol.* Yet here, Laertes! Aboard, aboard, for shame!
The wind sits in the shoulder of your sail,
And you are stay'd for. There; my blessing with thee!
And these few precepts in thy memory
See thou character.[5] Give thy thoughts no tongue,
Nor any unproportion'd[6] thought his act.
Be thou familiar, but by no means vulgar.
The friends thou hast, and their adoption tried,
Grapple them to thy soul with hoops of steel;
But do not dull thy palm with entertainment
Of each new-hatch'd, unfledg'd comrade. Beware
Of entrance to a quarrel, but being in,
Bear't that the opposed may beware of thee.
Give every man thy ear, but few thy voice.
Take each man's censure, but reserve thy judgment.
Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy,
But not express'd in fancy; rich, not gaudy;
For the apparel oft proclaims the man,
And they in France of the best rank and station
Are most select and generous, chief in that.[7]
Neither a borrower nor a lender be;
For loan oft loses both itself and friend,
And borrowing dulls the edge of husbandry.[8]
This above all: to thine own self be true,
And it must follow, as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man.
Farewell. My blessing season this in thee!
*Laer.* Most humbly do I take my leave, my lord.
*Pol.* The time invites you; go. Your servants tend.[9]
*Laer.* Farewell, Ophelia; and remember well
What I have said to you.
*Oph.* 'Tis in my memory lock'd,
And you yourself shall keep the key of it.
*Laer.* Farewell. [*Exit*

---

[1] buttons: buds.
[2] Youth . . . rebels: Youth will rebel against its better nature.
[3] ungracious: graceless.
[4] rede: advice.
[5] character: engrave.
[6] unproportion'd: hasty.
[7] chief . . . that: chiefly in apparel.
[8] husbandry: thrift.
[9] tend: await you.

*Pol.* What is't, Ophelia, he hath said to you?
*Oph.* So please you, something touching the Lord Hamlet.
*Pol.* Marry,[1] well bethought.
'Tis told me, he hath very oft of late
Given private time to you, and you yourself
Have of your audience been most free and bounteous.
If it be so, as so 'tis put on me[2]
And that in way of caution, I must tell you,
You do not understand yourself so clearly
As it behooves my daughter, and your honour.
What is between you? Give me up the truth.
*Oph.* He hath, my lord, of late made many tenders
Of his affection to me.
*Pol.* Affection! pooh! You speak like a green girl,
Unsifted[3] in such perilous circumstance.
Do you believe his tenders, as you call them?
*Oph.* I do not know, my lord, what I should think.
*Pol.* Marry, I'll teach you: think yourself a baby,
That you have ta'en these tenders for true pay,
Which are not sterling. Tender yourself more dearly;
Or—not to crack the wind of the poor phrase,
Running it thus—you'll tender me a fool.
*Oph.* My lord, he hath importun'd me with love
In honourable fashion.
*Pol.* Ay, fashion you may call it; go to, go to.
*Oph.* And hath given countenance to his speech, my lord,
With almost all the vows of heaven.
*Pol.* Ay, springes[4] to catch woodcocks. I do know,
When the blood burns, how prodigal the soul
Gives the tongue vows. These blazes, daughter,
Giving more light than heat, extinct in both,
Even in their promise, as it is a-making,
You must not take for fire. From this time, daughter,
Be somewhat scanter of your maiden presence.
Set your entreatments[5] at a higher rate
Than a command to parley. For Lord Hamlet,
Believe so much in him, that he is young,
And with a larger tether may he walk
Than may be given you. In few, Ophelia,
Do not believe his vows; for they are brokers.
Not of that dye which their investments[6] show,
But mere implorators of unholy suits,
Breathing like sanctified and pious bawds,
The better to beguile. This is for all:
I would not, in plain terms, from this time forth,
Have you so slander[7] any moment's leisure,
As to give words or talk with the Lord Hamlet.
Look to't, I charge you. Come your ways.
*Oph.* I shall obey, my lord.
[*Exeunt*

### SCENE IV

### *The Platform*

*Enter* HAMLET, HORATIO, *and* MARCELLUS

*Ham.* The air bites shrewdly; it is very cold.
*Hor.* It is a nipping and an eager air.
*Ham.* What hour now?
*Hor.* I think it lacks of twelve.
*Ham.* No, it is struck.
*Hor.* Indeed? I heard it not. Then it draws near the season
Wherein the spirit held his wont to walk.
[*A flourish of trumpets, and ordnance shot off, within.*]
What does this mean, my lord?

---

[1] marry: true.
[2] put . . . me: impressed upon me.
[3] unsifted: inexperienced.
[4] springes: snares.
[5] entreatments: interviews.
[6] investments: dress.
[7] slander: abuse.

*Ham.* The king doth wake to-night, and takes his rouse,
Keeps wassail, and the swaggering up-spring[1] reels;
And, as he drains his draughts of Rhenish down,
The kettle-drum and trumpet thus bray out
The triumph of his pledge.
*Hor.* Is it a custom?
*Ham.* Ay, marry, is't:
But to my mind, though I am native here
And to the manner born, it is a custom
More honour'd in the breach than the observance.
This heavy-headed revel east and west
Makes us traduc'd and tax'd[2] of other nations.
They clepe[3] us drunkards, and with swinish phrase
Soil our addition;[4] and indeed it takes
From our achievements, though perform'd at height,
The pith and marrow of our attribute.[5]
So, oft it chances in particular men,
That for some vicious mole of nature[6] in them,
As, in their birth—wherein they are not guilty,
Since nature cannot choose his origin—
By the o'ergrowth of some complexion,[7]
Oft breaking down the pales and forts of reason,
Or by some habit that too much o'er-leavens
The form of plausive[8] manners, that these men,
Carrying, I say, the stamp of one defect,
Being nature's livery, or fortune's star,—
Their virtues else—be they as pure as grace,
As infinite as man may undergo—
Shall in the general censure take corruption
From that particular fault: the dram of eale[9]
Doth all the noble substance of a doubt[10]
To his[11] own scandal.
*Hor.* Look, my lord, it comes!

*Enter* GHOST

*Ham.* Angels and ministers of grace defend us!
Be thou a spirit of health, or goblin damn'd,
Bring with thee airs from heaven, or blasts from hell,
Be thy intents wicked or charitable,
Thou com'st in such a questionable[12] shape
That I will speak to thee. I'll call thee Hamlet,
King, father: royal Dane, O, answer me!
Let me not burst in ignorance; but tell
Why thy canoniz'd[13] bones, hearsed in death,
Have burst their cerements; why the sepulchre,
Wherein we saw thee quietly inurn'd,
Hath op'd his ponderous and marble jaws,
To cast thee up again. What may this mean,
That thou, dead corse, again in complete steel
Revisit'st thus the glimpses of the moon,
Making night hideous; and we fools of nature
So horridly to shake our disposition
With thoughts beyond the reaches of our souls?
Say, why is this? Wherefore? What should we do?
GHOST *beckons* HAMLET.
*Hor.* It beckons you to go away with it,
As if it some impartment did desire
To you alone.
*Mar.* Look, with what courteous action
It waves you to a more removed ground.
But do not go with it.
*Hor.* No, by no means.

---

[1] **up-spring:** dance.
[2] **tax'd:** censured.
[3] **clepe:** call.
[4] **soil . . . addition:** sully our name.
[5] **pith . . . attribute:** the heart of our reputation.
[6] **mole . . . nature:** blemish.
[7] **complexion:** temperament.
[8] **plausive:** pleasing.
[9] **eale:** evil.
[10] **doth . . . doubt:** makes all the noble substance to be doubted.
[11] **his:** its.
[12] **questionable:** inviting question.
[13] **canoniz'd:** sainted, revered.

*Ham.* It will not speak; then I will follow it.
*Hor.* Do not, my lord.
*Ham.* Why, what should be the fear?
I do not set my life at a pin's fee;
And for my soul, what can it do to that,
Being a thing immortal as itself?
It waves me forth again. I'll follow it.
*Hor.* What if it tempt you toward the flood, my lord,
Or to the dreadful summit of the cliff
That beetles o'er his base into the sea,
And there assume some other horrible form,
Which might deprive your sovereignty of reason[1]
And draw you into madness? Think of it.
The very place puts toys of desperation,[2]
Without more motive, into every brain
That looks so many fathoms to the sea
And hears it roar beneath.
*Ham.* It waves me still.
Go on; I'll follow thee.
*Mar.* You shall not go, my lord.
*Ham.* Hold off your hands.
*Hor.* Be rul'd: you shall not go.
*Ham.* My fate cries out,
And makes each petty artery in this body
As hardy as the Nemean lion's nerve.[3]
Still am I call'd. Unhand me, gentlemen.
By heaven, I'll make a ghost of him that lets[4] me!
I say, away!—Go on: I'll follow thee.
[*Exeunt* Ghost *and* Hamlet
*Hor.* He waxes desperate with imagination.
*Mar.* Let's follow; 'tis not fit thus to obey him.
*Hor.* Have after. To what issue will this come?
*Mar.* Something is rotten in the state of Denmark.
*Hor.* Heaven will direct it.
*Mar.* Nay, let's follow him.
[*Exeunt*

## Scene V

### *Another Part of the Platform*

*Enter* Ghost *and* Hamlet

*Ham.* Where wilt thou lead me? Speak. I'll go no further.
*Ghost.* Mark me.
*Ham.* I will.
*Ghost.* My hour is almost come,
When I to sulphurous and tormenting flames
Must render up myself.
*Ham.* Alas, poor ghost!
*Ghost.* Pity me not, but lend thy serious hearing
To what I shall unfold.
*Ham.* Speak; I am bound to hear.
*Ghost.* So art thou to revenge, when thou shalt hear.
*Ham.* What?
*Ghost.* I am thy father's spirit,
Doom'd for a certain term to walk the night,
And for the day confin'd to fast in fires,
Till the foul crimes done in my days of nature
Are burnt and purg'd away. But that I am forbid
To tell the secrets of my prison-house,
I could a tale unfold whose lightest word
Would harrow up thy soul, freeze thy young blood,
Make thy two eyes, like stars, start from their spheres,
Thy knotted and combined locks to part
And each particular hair to stand an[5] end,
Like quills upon the fretful porpentine.[6]
But this eternal blazon[7] must not be
To ears of flesh and blood. List, list, O, list!
If thou didst ever thy dear father love—
*Ham.* O God!
*Ghost.* Revenge his foul and most unnatural murder.
*Ham.* Murder!
*Ghost.* Murder most foul, as in the best it is,
But this most foul, strange and unnatural.

---

[1] **deprive . . . reason:** take away your reason.
[2] **toys . . . desperation:** desperate fancies.
[3] **nerve:** sinew.
[4] **lets:** hinders.
[5] **an:** on.
[6] **porpentine:** porcupine.
[7] **eternal blazon:** blazoning of the mysteries of eternity.

*Ham.* Haste me to know't, that I, with wings as swift
As meditation or the thoughts of love,
May sweep to my revenge.
*Ghost.* I find thee apt;
And duller shouldst thou be than the fat weed
That roots itself in ease on Lethe wharf,[1]
Wouldst thou not stir in this. Now, Hamlet, hear:
'Tis given out that, sleeping in my orchard,[2]
A serpent stung me: so the whole ear of Denmark
Is by a forged process[3] of my death
Rankly abus'd. But know, thou noble youth,
The serpent that did sting thy father's life
Now wears his crown.
*Ham.* O my prophetic soul!
My uncle!
*Ghost.* Ay, that incestuous, that adulterate[4] beast,
With witchcraft of his wit, with traitorous gifts—
O wicked wit and gifts, that have the power
So to seduce!—won to his shameful lust
The will of my most seeming-virtuous queen.
O Hamlet, what a falling-off was there!
From me, whose love was of that dignity
That it went hand in hand even with the vow
I made to her in marriage, and to decline
Upon a wretch whose natural gifts were poor
To those of mine!
But virtue, as it never will be mov'd,
Though lewdness court it in a shape of heaven,
So lust, though to a radiant angel link'd,
Will sate itself in a celestial bed,
And prey on garbage.
But, soft! Methinks I scent the morning air:
Brief let me be. Sleeping within my orchard—
My custom always in the afternoon—
Upon my secure[5] hour thy uncle stole,
With juice of cursed hebenon[6] in a vial,
And in the porches of my ears did pour
The leperous distilment; whose effect
Holds such an enmity with blood of man
That swift as quicksilver it courses through
The natural gates and alleys of the body,
And with a sudden vigour it doth posset[7]
And curd, like eager[8] droppings into milk,
The thin and wholesome blood. So did it mine,
And a most instant tetter bark'd about,[9]
Most lazar-like,[10] with vile and loathsome crust,
All my smooth body.
Thus was I, sleeping, by a brother's hand
Of life, of crown, of queen, at once dispatch'd,
Cut off even in the blossoms of my sin,
Unhousel'd,[11] disappointed,[12] unanel'd,[13]
No reckoning made, but sent to my account
With all my imperfections on my head.
O, horrible! O, horrible! Most horrible!
If thou hast nature in thee, bear it not,
Let not the royal bed of Denmark be
A couch for luxury[14] and damned incest.
But, howsoever thou pursuest this act,
Taint not thy mind, nor let thy soul contrive
Against thy mother aught. Leave her to heaven
And to those thorns that in her bosom lodge,
To prick and sting her. Fare thee well at once!
The glow-worm shows the matin[15] to be near,
And gins to pale his uneffectual fire.
Adieu, adieu! Hamlet, remember me.
[*Exit*

---

[1] **Lethe wharf:** the banks of Lethe (the river of forgetfulness in Hades).

[2] **orchard:** garden.

[3] **process:** report.

[4] **adulterate:** adulterous.

[5] **secure:** unguarded.

[6] **hebenon:** henbane.

[7] **posset:** coagulate.

[8] **eager:** acid.

[9] **instant . . . about:** as bark encloses a tree.

[10] **lazar-like:** like a leper.

[11] **unhousel'd:** without having received the Eucharist.

[12] **disappointed:** unprepared.

[13] **unanel'd:** without extreme unction.

[14] **luxury:** lust.

[15] **matin:** morning.

*Ham.* O all you host of heaven! O earth! What else?
And shall I couple hell? O, fie! Hold, hold, my heart;
And you, my sinews, grow not instant old,
But bear me stiffly up. Remember thee!
Ay, thou poor ghost, while memory holds a seat
In this distracted globe.[1] Remember thee?
Yea, from the table[2] of my memory
I'll wipe away all trivial fond[3] records,
All saws of[4] books, all forms, all pressures[5] past,
That youth and observation copied there;
And thy commandment all alone shall live
Within the book and volume of my brain,
Unmix'd with baser matter; yes, by heaven!
O most pernicious woman!
O villain, villain, smiling, damned villain!
My tables,[2]—meet it is I set it down,
That one may smile, and smile, and be a villain;
At least I'm sure it may be so in Denmark. [*Writing.*]
So, uncle, there you are. Now to my word;[6]
It is "Adieu, adieu! Remember me."
I have sworn't.
*Mar.* *Hor.* [*within*]. My lord, my lord,—
*Mar.* [*within*]. Lord Hamlet,—
*Hor.* [*within*]. Heaven secure him!
*Ham.* So be it!
*Hor.* [*within*]. Hillo, ho, ho, my lord!
*Ham.* Hillo, ho, ho, boy! Come, bird, come.[7]

*Enter* HORATIO *and* MARCELLUS

*Mar.* How is't, my noble lord?
*Hor.* What news, my lord?
*Ham.* O, wonderful!
*Hor.* Good my lord, tell it.
*Ham.* No; you'll reveal it.
*Hor.* Not I, my lord, by heaven.
*Mar.* Nor I, my lord.
*Ham.* How say you, then? Would heart of man once think it?
But you'll be secret?
*Hor.* *Mar.* Ay, by heaven, my lord.
*Ham.* There's ne'er a villain dwelling in all Denmark
But he's an arrant knave.
*Hor.* There needs no ghost, my lord, come from the grave
To tell us this.
*Ham.* Why, right; you are i' the right;
And so, without more circumstance[8] at all,
I hold it fit that we shake hands and part:
You, as your business and desire shall point you;
For every man has business and desire,
Such as it is; and for mine own poor part,
Look you, I'll go pray.
*Hor.* These are but wild and whirling words, my lord.
*Ham.* I'm sorry they offend you, heartily;
Yes, faith, heartily.
*Hor.* There's no offence, my lord.
*Ham.* Yes, by Saint Patrick, but there is, Horatio,
And much offence too. Touching this vision here,
It is an honest ghost, that let me tell you
For your desire to know what is between us,
O'ermaster't as you may. And now, good friends,
As you are friends, scholars and soldiers,
Give me one poor request.
*Hor.* What is't, my lord? We will.
*Ham.* Never make known what you have seen tonight.
*Hor.* *Mar.* My lord, we will not.
*Ham.* Nay, but swear't.
*Hor.* In faith,
My lord, not I.
*Mar.* Nor I, my lord, in faith
*Ham.* Upon my sword.[9]

---

[1] globe: head.
[2] table: tablet, memorandum.
[3] fond: foolish.
[4] saws of: wise sayings from.
[5] pressures: impressions.
[6] word: watchword.
[7] come . . . come: the falconer's recall to the hawk.
[8] circumstance: formality.
[9] Upon . . . sword: He uses the cross-hilt of his sword.

*Mar.* We have sworn, my lord, already.
*Ham.* Indeed, upon my sword, indeed.
*Ghost* [*beneath*]. Swear.
*Ham.* Ah, ha, boy! say'st thou so?
Art thou there, true-penny?[1]
Come on—you hear this fellow in the cellarage—
Consent to swear.
*Hor.* Propose the oath, my lord.
*Ham.* Never to speak of this that you have seen.
Swear by my sword.
*Ghost* [*beneath*]. Swear.
*Ham.* Hic et ubique?[2] Then we'll shift our ground.
Come hither, gentlemen,
And lay your hands again upon my sword,—
Never to speak of this that you have heard,
Swear by my sword.
*Ghost* [*beneath*]. Swear.
*Ham.* Well said, old mole! Canst work i' the earth so fast?
A worthy pioner[3]!—Once more remove, good friends.
*Hor.* O day and night, but this is wondrous strange!
*Ham.* And therefore as a stranger give it welcome.
There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.
But come:
Here, as before, never, so help you mercy,
How strange or odd soe'er I bear myself,
As I perchance hereafter shall think meet
To put an antic[4] disposition on,
That you, at such times seeing me, never shall,
With arms encumber'd thus, or this head-shake,
Or by pronouncing of some doubtful phrase,
As "Well, well, we know," or "We could, an if we would,"
Or "If we list to speak," or "There be, an if they might,"
Or such ambiguous giving out, to note
That you know aught of me; this not to do,
So grace and mercy at your most need help you,
Swear.
*Ghost* [*beneath*]. Swear.
*Ham.* Rest, rest, perturbed spirit!—So, gentlemen,
With all my love I do commend me to you;
And what so poor a man as Hamlet is
May do, to express his love and friending to you,
God willing, shall not lack. Let us go in together;
And still your fingers on your lips, I pray.—
The time is out of joint: O cursed spite,
That ever I was born to set it right!—
Nay, come, let's go together.[5]
[*Exeunt*

## ACT II

### SCENE I

*A Room in the Castle*

*Enter* POLONIUS *and* REYNALDO

*Pol.* Give him this money, and these notes, Reynaldo.
*Reynaldo.* I will, my lord.
*Pol.* You shall do marvellous wisely, good Reynaldo,
Before you visit him, to make inquiry
Of his behaviour.
*Rey.* My lord, I did intend it.
*Pol.* Marry, well said; very well said. Look you, sir,
Inquire me first what Danskers[6] are in Paris;
And how, and who; what means, and where they keep,
What company, at what expense; and finding
By this encompassment and drift of question
That they do know my son, come you more nearer
Than your particular demands will touch it;

---

[1] true-penny: old fellow.
[2] Hic et ubique: here and everywhere.
[3] pioner: pioneer.
[4] antic: odd, fantastic.
[5] let's . . . together: without care for precedence.
[6] Danskers: Danes.

Take you,[1] as 'twere, some distant knowledge of him,
As thus "I know his father and his friends,
And in part him,"—do you mark this, Reynaldo?
*Rey.* Ay, very well, my lord.
*Pol.* "And in part him. But," you may say, "not well:
But, if't be he I mean, he's very wild;
Addicted so and so," and there put on him
What forgeries you please; marry, none so rank
As may dishonour him, take heed of that;
But, sir, such wanton, wild and usual slips
As are companions noted and most known
To youth and liberty.
*Rey.* As gaming, my lord.
*Pol.* Ay, of drinking, fencing, swearing, quarrelling,
Drabbing; you may go so far.
*Rey.* My lord, that would dishonour him.
*Pol.* 'Faith, no; as you may season it in the charge.
You must not put another scandal on him,
That he is open to incontinency;
That's not my meaning. But breathe his faults so quaintly[2]
That they may seem the taints[3] of liberty.
The flash and outbreak of a fiery mind,
A savageness in unreclaimed blood,
Of general assault.[4]
*Rey.* But, my good lord,—
*Pol.* Wherefore should you do this?
*Rey.* Ay, my lord,
I would know that.
*Pol.* Marry, sir, here's my drift;
And, I believe, it is a fetch of warrant;[5]
You laying these slight sullies on my son,
As 'twere a thing a little soil'd i' the working,
Mark you,
Your party in converse,[6] him you would sound,
Having ever seen in the prenominate[7] crimes
The youth you breathe of guilty, be assur'd
He closes with you in this consequence[8]:
"Good sir," or so, or "friend," or "gentleman,"
According to the phrase or the addition[9]
Of man and country.
*Rey.* Very good, my lord.
*Pol.* And then, sir, does he this—he does—what was I about to say? By the mass, I was about to say something. Where did I leave?
*Rey.* At "closes in the consequence," at "friend or so," and "gentleman."
*Pol.* At "closes in the consequence," ay, marry;
He closes thus: "I know the gentleman,
I saw him yesterday, or t'other day,
Or then, or then; with such, or such; and, as you say,
There was he gaming; there o'ertook in's rouse;[10]
There falling out at tennis:" or perchance,
"I saw him enter such a house of sale,"
Videlicet, a brothel, or so forth.
See you now,
Your bait of falsehood takes this carp of truth;
And thus do we of wisdom and of reach,[11]
With windlasses and with assays of bias,[12]
By indirections find directions out.
So, by my former lecture and advice,
Shall you my son. You have me, have you not?
*Rey.* My lord, I have.
*Pol.* God be wi' you; fare you well.
*Rey.* Good my lord!
*Pol.* Observe his inclination in yourself.[13]
*Rey.* I shall, my lord.

---

[1] **take you:** assume.
[2] **quaintly:** cleverly.
[3] **taints:** faults.
[4] **of . . . assault:** such as is common to youth.
[5] **it . . . warrant:** is warranted.
[6] **converse:** conversation.
[7] **prenominate:** aforesaid.
[8] **consequence:** conclusion.
[9] **addition:** title.
[10] **rouse:** bumper; drinking.
[11] **wisdom . . . reach:** wise and resourceful.
[12] **windlasses . . . bias:** windings and devious attempts.
[13] **observe . . . yourself:** keep it to yourself.

*Pol.* And let him ply his music.[1]
*Rey.* Well, my lord.
*Pol.* Farewell! [*Exit* Reynaldo

*Enter* Ophelia

How now, Ophelia! What's the matter?
*Oph.* Alas, my lord, I have been so affrighted!
*Pol.* With what, i' the name of Heaven?
*Oph.* My lord, as I was sewing in my closet,[2]
Lord Hamlet, with his doublet all unbrac'd[3];
No hat upon his head; his stockings foul'd,
Ungarter'd, and down-gyved[4] to his ankle;
Pale as his shirt; his knees knocking each other;
And with a look so piteous in purport
As if he had been loosed out of hell
To speak of horrors,—he comes before me.
*Pol.* Mad for thy love?
*Oph.* My lord, I do not know,
But truly, I do fear it.
*Pol.* What said he?
*Oph.* He took me by the wrist, and held me hard;
Then goes he to the length of all his arm,
And, with his other hand thus o'er his brow,
He falls to such perusal of my face
As he would draw it. Long stay'd he so.
At last, a little shaking of mine arm,
And thrice his head, thus, waving up and down,
He rais'd a sigh so piteous and profound
That it did seem to shatter all his bulk
And end his being. That done, he lets me go,
And, with his head over his shoulder turn'd,
He seem'd to find his way without his eyes;
For out o' doors he went without their help,
And, to the last, bended their light on me.
*Pol.* Come, go with me. I will go seek the king.
This is the very ecstasy[5] of love,
Whose violent property fordoes[6] itself
And leads the will to desperate undertakings
As oft as any passion under heaven
That does afflict our natures. I am sorry.
What, have you given him any hard words of late?
*Oph.* No, my good lord, but as you did command,
I did repel his letters and denied
His access to me.
*Pol.* That hath made him mad.
I am sorry that with better heed and judgment
I had not quoted[7] him. I fear'd he did but trifle,
And meant to wrack thee; but beshrew my jealousy!
By heaven, it is as proper to our age
To cast beyond ourselves[8] in our opinions
As it is common for the younger sort
To lack discretion. Come, go we to the king:
This must be known; which, being kept close, might move
More grief to hide than hate to utter[9] love. [*Exeunt*

### Scene II

*A Room in the Castle*

*Enter* King, Queen, Rosencrantz, Guildenstern, *and* Attendants

*King.* Welcome, dear Rosencrantz and Guildenstern!
Moreoever that[10] we much did long to see you,
The need we have to use you did provoke
Our hasty sending. Something have you heard
Of Hamlet's transformation; so I call it,
Sith[11] nor the exterior nor the inward man

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[1] let . . . music: Don't interfere.
[2] closet: room.
[3] unbrac'd: unfastened.
[4] down-gyved: hanging.
[5] ecstasy: madness.
[6] whose . . . itself: whose violence destroys itself.
[7] quoted: interpreted; observed.
[8] cast . . . ourselves: overreach.
[9] more . . . utter: might cause more grief if it is hidden than anger if it is made known.
[10] moreover that: besides the fact that.
[11] sith: since.

Resembles that it was. What it should be,
More than his father's death, that thus hath put him
So much from the understanding of himself,
I cannot dream of. I entreat you both,
That, being of so young days brought up with him,
And since so neighbour'd to[1] his youth and humour,
That you vouchsafe your rest[2] here in our court
Some little time: so by your companies
To draw him on to pleasures, and to gather,
So much as from occasion you may glean,
Whether aught, to us unknown, afflicts him thus,
That, open'd,[3] lies within our remedy.
*Queen.* Good gentlemen, he hath much talk'd of you,
And sure I am two men there are not living
To whom he more adheres. If it will please you
To show us so much gentry[4] and good will
As to expend your time with us awhile,
For the supply and profit of our hope,
Your visitation shall receive such thanks
As fits a king's remembrance.
*Rosencrantz.* Both your majesties
Might, by the sovereign power you have of us,[5]
Put your dread pleasures more into command
Than to entreaty.
*Guildenstern.* But we both obey,
And here give up ourselves, in the full bent
To lay our service freely at your feet,
To be commanded.
*King.* Thanks, Rosencrantz and gentle Guildenstern.
*Queen.* Thanks, Guildenstern and gentle Rosencrantz;
And I beseech you instantly to visit
My too much changed son. Go, some of you,
And bring these gentlemen where Hamlet is.
*Guild.* Heavens make our presence and our practices
Pleasant and helpful to him!
*Queen.* Ay, amen!
[*Exeunt* ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN, *and some* Attendants

*Enter* POLONIUS

*Pol.* The ambassadors from Norway, my good lord,
Are joyfully return'd.
*King.* Thou still[6] hast been the father of good news.
*Pol.* Have I, my lord? Assure you, my good liege,
I hold my duty, as I hold my soul,
Both to my God and to my gracious king;
And I do think, or else this brain of mine
Hunts not the trail of policy so sure
As it hath us'd to do, that I have found
The very cause of Hamlet's lunacy.
*King.* O, speak of that; that do I long to hear.
*Pol.* Give first admittance to the ambassadors;
My news shall be the fruit to that great feast.
*King.* Thyself do grace to them, and bring them in. [*Exit* POLONIUS

He tells me, my sweet Queen, that he hath found
The head and source of all your son's distemper.
*Queen.* I doubt it is no other but the main,—
His father's death, and our o'erhasty marriage.
*King.* Well, we shall sift him.

*Reënter* POLONIUS, *with* VOLTIMAND *and* CORNELIUS

Welcome, my good friends!
Say, Voltimand, what from our brother Norway?
*Volt.* Most fair return of greetings and desires.
Upon our first,[7] he sent out to suppress
His nephew's levies; which to him appear'd

---

[1] **neighbour'd to:** acquainted with.
[2] **vouchsafe . . . rest:** consent to stay.
[3] **open'd:** disclosed.
[4] **gentry:** courtesy.
[5] **of us:** over us.
[6] **still:** always.
[7] **first:** first request.

To be a preparation 'gainst the Polack;
But, better look'd into, he truly found
It was against your highness: whereat grieved,
That so his sickness, age and impotence
Was falsely borne in hand,[1] sends out arrests
On Fortinbras; which he, in brief, obeys;
Receives rebuke from Norway, and in fine
Makes vow before his uncle never more
To give th' assay[2] of arms against your majesty.
Whereon old Norway, overcome with joy,
Gives him three thousand crowns in annual fee,
And his commission to employ those soldiers,
So levi'd as before, against the Polack;
With an entreaty, herein further shown,
[*Giving a paper.*]
That it might please you to give quiet pass
Through your dominions for this enterprise,
On such regards of safety and allowance
As therein are set down.
*King.* It likes us well;
And at our more consider'd time we'll read,
Answer, and think upon this business.
Meantime we thank you for your well-took labour.
Go to your rest; at night we'll feast together.
Most welcome home!
[*Exeunt* Voltimand *and* Cornelius
*Pol.* This business is well ended.
My liege, and madam, to expostulate[3]
What majesty should be, what duty is,
Why day is day, night night, and time is time,
Were nothing but to waste night, day and time.
Therefore, since brevity is the soul of wit,
And tediousness the limbs and outward flourishes,
I will be brief: your noble son is mad;—
Mad call I it; for, to define true madness,
What is't but to be nothing else but mad?
But let that go.
*Queen.* More matter, with less art.
*Pol.* Madam, I swear I use no art at all.
That he is mad, 'tis true; 'tis true 'tis pity,
And pity 'tis 'tis true: a foolish figure;
But farewell it, for I will use no art.
Mad let us grant him, then; and now remains
That we find out the cause of this effect,
Or rather say, the cause of this defect,
For this effect defective comes by cause.
Thus it remains, and the remainder thus,
Perpend[4]:
I have a daughter—have while she is mine—
Who, in her duty and obedience, mark,
Hath given me this: now gather, and surmise.
[*Reads.*]

"*To the celestial and my soul's idol, the most beautified*[5] *Ophelia,*"—

That's an ill phrase, a vile phrase; "beautified" is a vile phrase: but you shall hear. Thus:

[*Reads.*]

"*In her excellent white bosom, these, etc.*"

*Queen.* Came this from Hamlet to her?
*Pol.* Good madam, stay awhile; I will be faithful.
[*Reads.*]

"*Doubt thou the stars are fire;*
*Doubt that the sun doth move;*
*Doubt truth to be a liar;*
*But never doubt I love.*

"*O dear Ophelia, I am ill at these numbers. I have not art to reckon my groans. But that I love thee best, O most best, believe it. Adieu.*

"*Thine evermore, most dear lady, whilst this machine is to him,*[6]
Hamlet."

This, in obedience, hath my daughter show'd me,
And more above,[7] hath his solicitings,

---

[1] falsely . . . hand: deceived.
[2] give . . . assay: venture the attempt.
[3] expostulate: discuss.
[4] perpend: consider.
[5] beautified: beautiful.
[6] machine . . . him: body is his.
[7] more above: moreover.

As they fell out by time, by means and place,
All given to mine ear.
*King.* But how hath she
Receiv'd his love?
*Pol.* What do you think of me?
*King.* As of a man faithful and honourable.
*Pol.* I would fain prove so. But what might you think,
When I had seen this hot love on the wing—
As I perceiv'd it, I must tell you that,
Before my daughter told me—what might you,
Or my dear majesty your Queen here, think,
If I had play'd the desk or table-book,
Or given my heart a winking,[1] mute and dumb,
Or look'd upon this love with idle sight,—
What might you think? No, I went round[2] to work,
And my young mistress thus I did bespeak.
"Lord Hamlet is a prince, out of thy star.
This must not be." And then I precepts gave her,
That she should lock herself from his resort,
Admit no messengers, receive no tokens.
Which done, she took the fruits of my advice;
And he, repulsed—a short tale to make—
Fell into sadness, then into a fast,
Thence to a watch,[3] thence into a weakness,
Thence to a lightness,[4] and, by this declension,
Into the madness wherein now he raves,
And all we mourn for.
*King.* Do you think 'tis this?
*Queen.* It may be, very likely.
*Pol.* Hath there been such a time—I'd fain know that—
That I have positively said "'Tis so,"
When it prov'd otherwise?
*King.* Not that I know.
*Pol.* [*pointing to his head and shoulder*].
Take this from this, if this be otherwise.
If circumstances lead me, I will find
Where truth is hid, though it were hid indeed
Within the centre.[5]
*King.* How may we try it further?
*Pol.* You know, sometimes he walks four hours together
Here in the lobby.
*Queen.* So he does indeed.
*Pol.* At such a time I'll loose my daughter to him.
Be you and I behind an arras[6] then;
Mark the encounter. If he love her not
And be not from his reason fall'n thereon,
Let me be no assistant for a state,
But keep a farm and carters.
*King.* We will try it.
*Queen.* But, look, where sadly the poor wretch comes reading.
*Pol.* Away, I do beseech you, both away.
I'll board[7] him presently.
[*Exeunt* King, Queen, *and* Attendants

*Enter* Hamlet, *reading*

O, give me leave:
How does my good Lord Hamlet?
*Hamlet.* Well, God-a-mercy.
*Pol.* Do you know me, my lord?
*Ham.* Excellent well; you are a fishmonger.
*Pol.* Not I, my lord.
*Ham.* Then I would you were so honest a man.
*Pol.* Honest, my lord?
*Ham.* Ay, sir. To be honest, as this world goes, is to be one man picked out of ten thousand.
*Pol.* That's very true, my lord.
*Ham.* For if the sun breed maggots in a dead dog, being a good kissing carrion,[8] —Have you a daughter?
*Pol.* I have, my lord.
*Ham.* Let her not walk i' the sun. Conception[9] is a blessing, but not as your daughter may conceive. Friend, look to't.

---

[1] **given . . . winking:** connived at this love.
[2] **round:** directly.
[3] **watch:** sleeplessness.
[4] **lightness:** light-headedness.
[5] **within . . . centre:** of the earth.
[6] **arras:** tapestry hangings.
[7] **board:** accost.
[8] **good . . . carrion:** good for kissing (by the sun).
[9] **conception:** understanding.

*Pol.* [*aside*]. How say you by that? Still harping on my daughter. Yet he knew me not at first; he said I was a fishmonger. He is far gone, far gone. And truly in my youth I suffered much extremity for love; very near this. I'll speak to him again. What do you read, my lord?

*Ham.* Words, words, words.

*Pol.* What is the matter, my lord?

*Ham.* Between who?

*Pol.* I mean, the matter that you read, my lord.

*Ham.* Slanders, sir; for the satirical rogue says here that old men have grey beards, that their faces are wrinkled, their eyes purging thick amber or plumtree gum, and that they have a plentiful lack of wit, together with most weak hams: all which, sir, though I most powerfully and potently believe, yet I hold it not honesty to have it thus set down; for yourself, sir, should be old as I am, if like a crab you could go backward.

*Pol.* [*aside*]. Though this be madness, yet there is method in't.—Will you walk out of the air, my lord?

*Ham.* Into my grave.

*Pol.* Indeed, that is out o' the air. [*Aside.*] How pregnant sometimes his replies are! A happiness that often madness hits on, which reason and sanity could not so prosperously be delivered of. I will leave him, and suddenly contrive the means of meeting between him and my daughter.—My honourable lord, I will most humbly take my leave of you.

*Ham.* You cannot, sir, take from me any thing that I will more willingly part withal; except my life, except my life, except my life.

*Pol.* Fare you well, my lord.

*Ham.* These tedious old fools!

*Enter* Rosencrantz *and* Guildenstern

*Pol.* You go to seek the Lord Hamlet; there he is.

*Rosen.* [*to Polonius*]. God save you, sir! [*Exit* Polonius

*Guild.* My honoured lord!

*Rosen.* My most dear lord!

*Ham.* My excellent good friends! How dost thou, Guildenstern?—Ah, Rosencrantz! Good lads, how do ye both?

*Rosen.* As the indifferent[1] children of the earth.

*Guild.* Happy, in that we are not over-happy;
On fortune's cap we are not the very button.

*Ham.* Nor the soles of her shoe?

*Rosen.* Neither, my lord.

*Ham.* Then you live about her waist, or in the middle of her favours? What's the news?

*Rosen.* None, my lord, but that the world's grown honest.

*Ham.* Then is doomsday near. But your news is not true. Let me question more in particular: what have you, my good friends, deserved at the hands of fortune, that she sends you to prison hither?

*Guild.* Prison, my lord!

*Ham.* Denmark's a prison.

*Rosen.* Then is the world one.

*Ham.* A goodly one; in which there are many confines, wards and dungeons, Denmark being one o' the worst.

*Rosen.* We think not so, my lord.

*Ham.* Why, then, 'tis none to you; for there is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so. To me it is a prison.

*Rosen.* Why then, your ambition makes it one; 'tis too narrow for your mind.

*Ham.* O God, I could be bounded in a nut-shell and count myself a king of infinite space, were it not that I have bad dreams.

*Guild.* Which dreams indeed are ambition, for the very substance of the ambitious is merely the shadow of a dream.

*Ham.* A dream itself is but a shadow.

*Rosen.* Truly, and I hold ambition of so airy and light a quality that it is but a shadow's shadow.

*Ham.* Then are our beggars bodies, and our monarchs and outstretched[2] heroes the beggars' shadows. Shall we to the court? for, by my fay, I cannot reason.

---

[1] **indifferent**: undistinguished, ordinary.

[2] **outstretched**: pretentious.

*Rosen.* *Guild.* We'll wait upon you.

*Ham.* No such matter. I will not sort you with the rest of my servants; for, to speak to you like an honest man, I am most dreadfully attended. But, in the beaten way of friendship,[1] what make you at Elsinore?

*Rosen.* To visit you, my lord; no other occasion.

*Ham.* Beggar that I am, I am even poor in thanks, but I thank you: and sure, dear friends, my thanks are too dear a halfpenny. Were you not sent for? Is it your own inclining? Is it a free visitation? Come, deal justly with me. Come, come; nay, speak.

*Guild.* What should we say, my lord?

*Ham.* Why, any thing, but to the purpose. You were sent for; and there is a kind of confession in your looks which your modesties have not craft enough to colour. I know the good king and queen have sent for you.

*Rosen.* To what end, my lord?

*Ham.* That you must teach me. But let me conjure you, by the rights of our fellowship, by the consonancy[2] of our youth, by the obligation of our ever-preserved love, and by what more dear a better proposer could charge you withal, be even and direct with me, whether you were sent for, or no?

*Rosen.* [*aside to* Guildenstern]. What say you?

*Ham.* [*aside*]. Nay, then, I have an eye of you.[3]—If you love me, hold not off.

*Guild.* My lord, we were sent for.

*Ham.* I will tell you why; so shall my anticipation prevent your discovery,[4] and your secrecy to the king and queen moult no feather. I have of late—but wherefore I know not—lost all my mirth, forgone all custom of exercises; and indeed it goes so heavily with my disposition that this goodly frame, the earth, seems to me a sterile promontory, this most excellent canopy, the air, look you, this brave o'erhanging firmament, this majestical roof fretted[5] with golden fire, why, it appears no other thing to me than a foul and pestilent congregation of vapours. What a piece of work is man! How noble in reason! How infinite in faculty! In form and moving how express[6] and admirable! In action how like an angel! In apprehension how like a god! The beauty of the world! The paragon of animals! And yet, to me, what is this quintessence of dust? Man delights not me: no, nor woman neither, though by your smiling you seem to say so.

*Rosen.* My lord, there was no such stuff in my thoughts.

*Ham.* Why did you laugh then, when I said "Man delights not me"?

*Rosen.* To think, my lord, if you delight not in man, what lenten[7] entertainment the players shall receive from you. We coted[8] them on the way; and hither are they coming, to offer you service.

*Ham.* He that plays the king shall be welcome; his majesty shall have tribute of me. The adventurous knight shall use his foil and target; the lover shall not sigh gratis; the humorous man shall end his part in peace; the clown shall make those laugh whose lungs are tickle o' the sere;[9] and the lady shall say her mind freely, or the blank verse shall halt for't. What players are they?

*Rosen.* Even those you were wont to take delight in; the tragedians of the city.

*Ham.* How chances it they travel? Their residence, both in reputation and profit, was better both ways.

*Rosen.* I think their inhibition[10] comes by the means of the late innovation.

*Ham.* Do they hold the same estimation they did when I was in the city? Are they so followed?

*Rosen.* No, indeed, they are not.

*Ham.* How comes it? Do they grow rusty?

---

[1] **beaten . . . friendship:** the much-trodden path; i.e., our old friendship.

[2] **consonancy:** similarity in age.

[3] **of you:** on you.

[4] **so . . . discovery:** anticipate your revealing it.

[5] **fretted:** adorned.

[6] **express:** distinguished.

[7] **lenten:** meagre.

[8] **coted:** passed.

[9] **tickle . . . sere:** sensitive on the trigger.

[10] **inhibition:** prohibition to act. This may refer to a definite order of 1603, due to the plague in London; or it may mean that the *innovation* of the children's companies has hindered the *business* of the professional theatres.

*Rosen.* Nay, their endeavour keeps in the wonted pace. But there is, sir, an aery[1] of children, little eyases,[2] that cry out on the top of question,[3] and are most tyrannically[4] clapped for't: these are now the fashion, and so berattle[5] the common stages—so they call them—that many wearing rapiers are afraid of goose-quills,[6] and dare scarce come thither.

*Ham.* What, are they children? Who maintains 'em? How are they escoted?[7] Will they pursue the quality[8] no longer than they can sing? Will they not say afterwards, if they should grow themselves to common players—as it is most like, if their means are no better—their writers do them wrong, to make them exclaim against their own succession?

*Rosen.* 'Faith, there has been much to do on both sides; and the nation holds it no sin to tarre[9] them to controversy. There was, for a while, no money bid for argument,[10] unless the poet and the player went to cuffs in the question.

*Ham.* Is't possible?

*Guild.* O, there has been much throwing about of brains.

*Ham.* Do the boys carry it away?[11]

*Rosen.* Ay, that they do, my lord; Hercules and his load too.[12]

*Ham.* It is not very strange; for mine uncle is king of Denmark, and those that would make mows[13] at him while my father lived, give twenty, forty, fifty, an hundred ducats apiece for his picture in little.[14] 'Sblood, there is something in this more than natural, if philosophy could find it out.

*Flourish of trumpets within.*

*Guild.* There are the players.

*Ham.* Gentlemen, you are welcome to Elsinore. Your hands, come. The appurtenance[15] of welcome is fashion and ceremony. Let me comply with you in this garb,[16] lest my extent[17] to the players, which, I tell you, must show fairly outward, should more appear like entertainment than yours. You are welcome; but my uncle-father and aunt-mother are deceived.

*Guild.* In what, my dear lord?

*Ham.* I am but mad north-north-west. When the wind is southerly, I know a hawk from a handsaw.[18]

*Enter* POLONIUS

*Pol.* Well be with you, gentlemen!

*Ham.* Hark you, Guildenstern; and you too: at each ear a hearer. That great baby you see there is not yet out of his swaddling-clouts.

*Rosen.* Happily he's the second time come to them: for they say an old man is twice a child.

*Ham.* I will prophesy he comes to tell me of the players; mark it.—You say right, sir; o' Monday morning. 'Twas so indeed.

*Pol.* My lord, I have news to tell you.

*Ham.* My lord, I have news to tell you. When Roscius[19] was an actor in Rome,—

*Pol.* The actors are come hither, my lord.

*Ham.* Buz, buz![20]

*Pol.* Upon mine honour,—

*Ham.* Then came each actor on his ass,[21]—

*Pol.* The best actors in the world, either for tragedy, comedy, history, pastoral, pastoral-comical, historical-pastoral, tragical-historical, tragical-comical-historical-pastoral, scene individable,[22] or poem unlimited. Seneca cannot be too heavy, nor Plautus too light. For the law of writ and the liberty, these are the only men.

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[1] **aery:** eagle's nest.

[2] **eyases:** unfledged hawks; a reference to the children of the Chapel Royal.

[3] **top of question:** top of their voices.

[4] **tyrannically:** violently.

[5] **berattle:** berate.

[6] **goose-quills:** hack writers who furnish the parts abusing the adult players.

[7] **escoted:** paid.

[8] **quality:** profession.

[9] **to tarre:** sit on (to fight).

[10] **argument:** plot of a play.

[11] **do . . . away:** carry off the prize.

[12] **Hercules . . . load:** Perhaps an allusion to *The Globe Theatre*, which had for a sign, Hercules bearing the globe on his shoulders.

[13] **mows:** grimaces.

[14] **in little:** in miniature

[15] **appurtenance:** accompaniment.

[16] **in . . . garb:** in this fashion.

[17] **extent:** behavior.

[18] **handsaw:** probably a corruption of hernshaw, heron.

[19] **Roscius:** the great Roman actor of the time of Cicero.

[20] **Buz, buz:** modern "Chestnuts!"—an exclamation of impatience at a well-known story.

[21] **Then . . . ass:** Probably a line from a ballad, now lost.

[22] **individable:** keeping the Unity of Place.

*Ham.* O Jephthah,[1] judge of Israel, what a treasure hadst thou!

*Pol.* What a treasure had he, my lord?

*Ham.* Why,

"*One fair daughter, and no more,*
*The which he loved passing well.*"

*Pol.* [*aside*]. Still on my daughter.

*Ham.* Am I not i' the right, old Jephthah?

*Pol.* If you call me Jephthah, my lord, I have a daughter that I love passing well.

*Ham.* Nay, that follows not.

*Pol.* What follows, then, my lord?

*Ham.* Why,

"*As by lot, God wot,*"

and then, you know,

"*It came to pass, as most like it was,*"—

the first row of the pious chanson[2] will show you more; for look, where my abridgements[3] come.—

*Enter four or five* PLAYERS

You are welcome, masters; welcome, all. I am glad to see thee well. Welcome, good friends. O, my old friend! Thy face is valanced[4] since I saw thee last. Comest thou to beard me in Denmark? What, my young lady and mistress![5] By'r lady, your ladyship is nearer to heaven, than when I saw you last, by the altitude of a chopine.[6] Pray God, your voice, like a piece of uncurrent gold, be not cracked within the ring.[7] Masters, you are all welcome. We'll e'en to't like French falconers, fly at any thing we see: we'll have a speech straight. Come, give us a taste of your quality;[8] come, a passionate speech.

*1st Player.* What speech, my lord?

*Ham.* I heard thee speak me a speech once, but it was never acted; or, if it was, not above once; for the play, I remember, pleased not the million: 'twas caviare[9] to the general. But it was—as I received it, and others, whose judgments in such matters cried in the top of mine[10]—an excellent play, well digested in the scenes, set down with as much modesty as cunning. I remember, one said there were no sallets[11] in the lines to make the matter savoury, nor no matter in the phrase that might indict[12] the author of affectation; but called it an honest method, as wholesome as sweet, and by very much more handsome than fine. One speech in it I chiefly loved: 'twas Æneas' tale to Dido; and thereabout[13] of it especially, where he speaks of Priam's slaughter. If it live in your memory, begin at this line: let me see, let me see,—

The rugged Pyrrhus, like the Hyrcanian beast,[14]

—it is not so:—it begins with Pyrrhus:—

The rugged Pyrrhus, he whose sable arms,
Black as his purpose, did the night resemble
When he lay couched in the ominous horse,
Hath now this dread and black complexion smear'd
With heraldry more dismal. Head to foot
Now is he total gules;[15] horridly trick'd
With blood of fathers, mothers, daughters, sons,
Bak'd and impasted with the parching streets,
That lend a tyrannous and damned light
To their lord's murder. Roasted in wrath and fire,
And thus o'er-sized[16] with coagulate gore,
With eyes like carbuncles, the hellish Pyrrhus
Old grandsire Priam seeks.

So, proceed you.

*Pol.* 'Fore God, my lord, well spoken, with good accent and good discretion.

*1st Play.* Anon he finds him
Striking too short at Greeks. His antique sword,
Rebellious to his arm, lies where it falls,
Repugnant to command. Unequal match'd,
Pyrrhus at Priam drives; in rage strikes wide;
But with the whiff and wind of his fell sword
The unnerv'd father falls. Then senseless Ilium,
Seeming to feel this blow, with flaming top
Stoops to his base, and with a hideous crash
Takes prisoner Pyrrhus' ear; for, lo! his sword,

---

[1] **O Jephthah:** from an old ballad.

[2] **first . . . chanson:** first stanza of the pious song.

[3] **abridgements:** those to cut short our talk.

[4] **valanced:** bearded.

[5] **mistress:** boy who played the women's parts.

[6] **chopine:** a clog with a very thick sole.

[7] **uncurrent . . . ring:** Coins in which a crack extended inside the circle around the Queen's head were no longer current.

[8] **quality:** ability.

[9] **caviare:** this Russian delicacy is appreciated only by a trained taste.

[10] **cried . . . mine:** outvoiced.

[11] **sallets:** salad as an appetizer.

[12] **indict:** convict.

[13] **thereabout:** the part.

[14] **Hyrcanian beast:** Hyrcan (Persian) tiger.

[15] **gules:** blood (red).

[16] **o'er-sized:** covered with size (glue).

Which was declining on the milky[1] head
Of reverend Priam, seem'd i' the air to stick.
So, as a painted tyrant, Pyrrhus stood,
And like a neutral to his will and matter,
Did nothing.
But, as we often see, against some storm,
A silence in the heavens, the rack[2] stand still,
The bold winds speechless, and the orb below
As hush as death, anon the dreadful thunder
Doth rend the region;[3] so, after Pyrrhus' pause
Aroused vengeance sets him new a-work;
And never did the Cyclops' hammers fall
On Mars's armour, forg'd for proof eterne,[4]
With less remorse[5] than Pyrrhus' bleeding sword
Now falls on Priam.
Out, out, thou strumpet, Fortune! All you gods,
In general synod, take away her power;
Break all the spokes and fellies from her wheel,
And bowl the round nave[6] down the hill of heaven,
As low as to the fiends!

*Pol.* This is too long.

*Ham.* It shall to the barber's, with your beard. Prithee, say on.—He's for a jig,[7] or a tale of bawdry, or he sleeps.—Say on; come to Hecuba.

*1st Play.* But who, O who had seen the mobled[8] queen—

*Ham.* "The mobled queen"?

*Pol.* That's good: "mobled queen" is good.

*1st Play.* Run barefoot up and down, threatening the flames
With bisson rheum;[9] a clout upon that head
Where late the diadem stood, and for a robe,
About her lank and all o'er-teemed[10] loins,
A blanket, in the alarm of fear caught up;
Who this had seen, with tongue in venom steep'd,
'Gainst Fortune's state would treason have pronounc'd.
But if the gods themselves did see her then
When she saw Pyrrhus make malicious sport,
In mincing with his sword her husband's limbs,
The instant burst of clamour that she made,
Unless things mortal move them not at all,
Would have made milch[11] the burning eyes of Heaven,
And passion[12] in the gods.

*Pol.* Look, whether he has not turned his colour and has tears in's eyes.—Pray you, no more.

*Ham.* 'Tis well; I'll have thee speak out the rest soon. Good my lord, will you see the players well bestowed? Do you hear, let them be well used; for they are the abstract and brief chronicles of the time. After your death, you were better have a bad epitaph than their ill report while you live.

*Pol.* My lord, I will use them according to their desert.

*Ham.* God's bodykins, man, much better. Use every man after his desert, and who should scape whipping? Use them after your own honour and dignity. The less they deserve, the more merit is in your bounty. Take them in.

*Pol.* Come, sirs.

*Ham.* Follow him, friends. We'll hear a play to-morrow. [*Exit* Polonius *with all the* Players *but the* First.]—Dost thou hear me, old friend? Can you play *The Murder of Gonzago?*

*1st Play.* Ay, my lord.

*Ham.* We'll ha't to-morrow night. You could, for a need, study a speech of some dozen or sixteen lines, which I would set down and insert in't, could you not?

*1st Play.* Ay, my lord.

*Ham.* Very well. Follow that lord; and look you mock him not. [*Exit* First Player.]—My good friends, I'll leave you till night. You are welcome to Elsinore.

*Rosen.* Good my lord!

*Ham.* Ay, so, God be wi' ye! [*Exeunt* Rosencrantz *and* Guildenstern.] Now I am alone.
O, what a rogue and peasant slave am I!
Is it not monstrous that this player here,
But in a fiction, in a dream of passion,
Could force his soul so to his own conceit[13]
That from her working all his visage wann'd,
Tears in his eyes, distraction in's aspect,
A broken voice, and his whole function[14] suiting

---

[1] **milky:** milk-white.
[2] **rack:** clouds.
[3] **region:** sky.
[4] **proof eterne:** eternal resistance.
[5] **remorse:** pity.
[6] **nave:** hub.
[7] **jig:** comic song.
[8] **mobled:** veiled.
[9] **bisson rheum:** blinding tears.
[10] **o'er-teemed:** overtaxed.
[11] **milch:** moist.
[12] **passion:** pity.
[13] **conceit:** idea.
[14] **his . . . function:** all his powers.

With forms to his conceit, and all for nothing!
For Hecuba!
What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba,
That he should weep for her? What would he do,
Had he the motive and the cue for passion
That I have? He would drown the stage with tears
And cleave the general ear with horrid speech,
Make mad the guilty, and appal the free,[1]
Confound the ignorant, and amaze[2] indeed
The very faculties of eyes and ears.
Yet I,
A dull and muddy-mettled[3] rascal, peak,[4]
Like John-a-dreams,[5] unpregnant of[6] my cause,
And can say nothing; no, not for a king,
Upon whose property and most dear life
A damn'd defeat was made. Am I a coward?
Who calls me villain, breaks my pate across,
Plucks off my beard, and blows it in my face,
Tweaks me by the nose, gives me the lie i' the throat,
As deep as to the lungs? Who does me this?
Ha!
'Swounds, I should take it; for it cannot be
But I am pigeon-liver'd, and lack gall
To make oppression bitter, or ere this
I should have fatted all the region kites
With this slave's offal. Bloody, bawdy villain!
Remorseless, treacherous, lecherous, kindless[7] villain!
O, vengeance!
Why, what an ass am I! This is most brave,
That I, the son of a dear father murder'd,
Prompted to my revenge by heaven and hell,
Must, like a whore, unpack my heart with words,
And fall a-cursing, like a very drab,
A scullion!
Fie upon't! Foh! About,[8] my brain! I have heard
That guilty creatures sitting at a play
Have by the very cunning of the scene
Been struck so to the soul that presently[9]
They have proclaim'd their malefactions;
For murder, though it have no tongue, will speak
With most miraculous organ. I'll have these players
Play something like the murder of my father
Before mine uncle. I'll observe his looks;
I'll tent[10] him to the quick. If he but blench,[11]
I know my course. The spirit that I have seen
May be the devil; and the devil hath power
To assume a pleasing shape; yea, and perhaps
Out of my weakness, and my melancholy,
As he is very potent with such spirits,
Abuses[12] me to damn me. I'll have grounds
More relative[13] than this. The play's the thing
Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the king. [*Exit*

## ACT III

### SCENE I

*A Room in the Castle*

*Enter* KING, QUEEN, POLONIUS, OPHELIA, ROSENCRANTZ, *and* GUILDENSTERN

*King.* And can you, by no drift of circumstance,
Get from him why he puts on this confusion,

---

[1] **free:** innocent.
[2] **amaze:** confuse.
[3] **muddy-mettled:** dull-spirited.
[4] **peak:** pine.
[5] **John-a-dreams:** John the Dreamer, a dreamy, idle fellow.
[6] **unpregnant of:** dull to.
[7] **kindless:** unnatural.
[8] **About:** To the task.
[9] **presently:** straightway.
[10] **tent:** probe.
[11] **blench:** shrink.
[12] **abuses:** deceives.
[13] **relative:** pertinent.

Grating[1] so harshly all his days of quiet
With turbulent and dangerous lunacy?
*Rosen.* He does confess he feels himself distracted;
But from what cause he will by no means speak.
*Guild.* Nor do we find him forward to be sounded,
But with a crafty madness, keeps aloof,
When we would bring him on to some confession
Of his true state.
*Queen.* Did he receive you well?
*Rosen.* Most like a gentleman.
*Guild.* But with much forcing of his disposition.
*Rosen.* Niggard of question, but, of our demands,
Most free in his reply.
*Queen.* Did you assay him
To any pastime?
*Rosen.* Madam, it so fell out, that certain players
We o'er-raught[2] on the way. Of these we told him;
And there did seem in him a kind of joy
To hear of it. They are about the court,
And, as I think, they have already order
This night to play before him.
*Pol.* 'Tis most true;
And he beseech'd me to entreat your majesties
To hear and see the matter.
*King.* With all my heart; and it doth much content me
To hear him so inclin'd.
Good gentlemen, give him a further edge,[3]
And drive his purpose on to these delights.
*Rosen.* We shall, my lord.
[*Exeunt* ROSENCRANTZ *and* GUILDENSTERN
*King.* Sweet Gertrude, leave us too;
For we have closely[4] sent for Hamlet hither,
That he, as 'twere by accident, may here
Affront[5] Ophelia.
Her father and myself, lawful espials,[6]
Will so bestow ourselves that, seeing, unseen,
We may of their encounter frankly judge,
And gather by him, as he is behaved,
If 't be the affliction of his love or no
That thus he suffers for.
*Queen.* I shall obey you,
And for your part, Ophelia, I do wish
That your good beauties be the happy cause
Of Hamlet's wildness: so shall I hope your virtues
Will bring him to his wonted way again,
To both your honours.
*Oph.* Madam, I wish it may.
[*Exit* QUEEN
*Pol.* Ophelia, walk you here.—Gracious,[7] so please you,
We will bestow ourselves.—[*To* OPHELIA] Read on this book,
That show of such an exercise may colour
Your loneliness. We are oft to blame in this—
'Tis too much[8] prov'd—that with devotion's visage,
And pious action, we do sugar o'er
The devil himself.
*King* [*aside*]. O, 'tis too true!
How smart a lash that speech doth give my conscience!
The harlot's cheek, beauti'd with plastering art,
Is not more ugly to the thing that helps it
Than is my deed to my most painted[9] word:
O heavy burthen!
*Pol.* I hear him coming. Let's withdraw, my lord.
[*Exeunt* KING *and* POLONIUS

*Enter* HAMLET

*Ham.* To be, or not to be,—that is the question:
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
And by opposing end them? To die; to sleep;

---

[1] grating: disturbing.
[2] o'er-raught: overreached; overtook.
[3] edge: incitement.
[4] closely: privately.
[5] affront: encounter.
[6] espials: spies.
[7] gracious: addressed to the king.
[8] much: often.
[9] painted: ungenuine.

No more; and by a sleep to say we end
The heart-ache, and the thousand natural shocks
That flesh is heir to, 'tis a consummation
Devoutly to be wish'd. To die; to sleep;
To sleep; perchance to dream,—ay, there's the rub;[1]
For in that sleep of death what dreams may come,
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,[2]
Must give us pause. There's the respect[3]
That makes calamity of so long life;
For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,
The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,
The pangs of dispris'd love, the law's delay
The insolence of office, and the spurns
That patient merit of the unworthy takes,
When he himself might his quietus[4] make
With a bare bodkin?[5] Who would fardels[6] bear,
To grunt and sweat under a weary life,
But that the dread of something after death,
The undiscover'd country from whose bourn[7]
No traveller returns, puzzles the will,
And makes us rather bear those ills we have
Than fly to others that we know not of?
Thus conscience does make cowards of us all;
And thus the native hue[8] of resolution
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought,
And enterprises of great pith and moment
With this regard their currents turn away,
And lose the name of action.—Soft you now!
The fair Ophelia!—Nymph, in thy orisons[9]
Be all my sins remember'd.
*Oph.* Good my lord,
How does your honour for this many a day?
*Ham.* I humbly thank you; well, well, well.
*Oph.* My lord, I have remembrances of yours,
That I have longed long to re-deliver;
I pray you, now receive them.
*Ham.* No, not I;
I never gave you aught.
*Oph.* My honour'd lord, I know right well you did,
And, with them, words of so sweet breath compos'd
As made the things more rich. Their perfume lost,
Take these again; for to the noble mind
Rich gifts wax poor when givers prove unkind.
There, my lord.

*Ham.* Ha, ha! Are you honest?[10]

*Oph.* My lord?

*Ham.* Are you fair?

*Oph.* What means your lordship?

*Ham.* That if you be honest, and fair, your honesty should admit no discourse[11] to your beauty.

*Oph.* Could beauty, my lord, have better commerce than with honesty?

*Ham.* Ay, truly; for the power of beauty will sooner transform honesty from what it is to a bawd than the force of honesty can translate beauty into his likeness. This was sometime a paradox, but now the time gives it proof. I did love you once.

*Oph.* Indeed, my lord, you made me believe so.

*Ham.* You should not have believed me; for virtue cannot so inoculate our old stock but we shall relish of it.[12] I loved you not.

*Oph.* I was the more deceived.

*Ham.* Get thee to a nunnery. Why wouldst thou be a breeder of sinners? I am myself indifferent honest; but yet I could accuse me of such things that it were better my mother had not borne me. I am very proud, revengeful, ambitious, with more offences at my beck than I have thoughts to put them in, imagination to give them shape, or time to act them in. What should such fellows as I do crawling between earth and heaven? We are arrant knaves, all; believe none of us. Go thy ways to a nunnery. Where's your father?

---

[1] **rub:** anything in bowling that turns aside the bowl.
[2] **mortal coil:** turmoil of mortality.
[3] **respect:** consideration.
[4] **quietus:** quittance (a law term).
[5] **bodkin:** dagger.
[6] **fardels:** burdens.
[7] **bourn:** boundary.
[8] **native hue:** natural color.
[9] **orisons:** prayers.
[10] **honest:** virtuous.
[11] **no discourse:** no parley with.
[12] **relish . . . it:** have a flavor of it.

*Oph.* At home, my lord.

*Ham.* Let the doors be shut upon him, that he may play the fool no where but in's own house. Farewell.

*Oph.* O, help him, you sweet heavens!

*Ham.* If thou dost marry, I'll give thee this plague for thy dowry: be thou as chaste as ice, as pure as snow, thou shalt not escape calumny. Get thee to a nunnery, go. Farewell. Or, if thou wilt needs marry, marry a fool; for wise men know well enough what monsters you make of them. To a nunnery, go, and quickly too. Farewell.

*Oph.* O heavenly powers, restore him.

*Ham.* I have heard of your paintings too, well enough. God has given you one face, and you make yourselves another. You jig, you amble, and you lisp, and nickname[1] God's creatures, and make your wantonness your ignorance. Go to, I'll no more on't; it hath made me mad. I say, we will have no more marriages. Those that are married already, all but one, shall live. The rest shall keep as they are. To a nunnery, go. [*Exit*

*Oph.* O, what a noble mind is here o'erthrown!
The courtier's, soldier's, scholar's, eye, tongue, sword;
The expectancy and rose[2] of the fair state,
The glass of fashion and the mould of form,
The observ'd of all observers, quite, quite down!
And I, of ladies most deject and wretched,
That suck'd the honey of his music vows,
Now see that noble and most sovereign reason,
Like sweet bells jangled, out of tune and harsh;
That unmatch'd form and feature of blown youth
Blasted with ecstasy.[3] O, woe is me,
To have seen what I have seen, see what I see!

*Reënter* King *and* Polonius

*King.* Love? His affections do not that way tend;
Nor what he spake, though it lack'd form a little,
Was not like madness. There's something in his soul,
O'er which his melancholy sits on brood;
And I do doubt the hatch and the disclose
Will be some danger: which for to prevent,
I have in quick determination
Thus set it down: he shall with speed to England,
For the demand of our neglected tribute.
Haply the seas and countries different
With variable objects shall expel
This something-settled matter in his heart,
Whereon his brains still beating puts him thus
From fashion of himself. What think you on't?

*Pol.* It shall do well. But yet do I believe
The origin and commencement of his grief[4]
Sprung from neglected love.—How now, Ophelia!
You need not tell us what Lord Hamlet said;
We heard it all.—My lord, do as you please;
But, if you hold it fit, after the play,
Let his queen mother all alone entreat him
To show his grief. Let her be round[5] with him;
And I'll be plac'd, so please you, in the ear
Of all their conference. If she find[6] him not,

---

[1] **nickname:** misname.

[2] **expectancy . . . rose:** hope and ornament.

[3] **ecstasy:** madness.

[4] **grief:** trouble.

[5] **round:** direct.

[6] **find:** find out, expose.

To England send him; or confine him where
Your wisdom best shall think.
*King.* It shall be so.
Madness in great ones must not unwatch'd go. [*Exeunt*

## Scene II

### *A Hall in the Castle*

*Enter* Hamlet *and* Players

*Ham.* Speak the speech, I pray you, as I pronounced it to you, trippingly on the tongue; but if you mouth it, as many of your players do, I had as lief the town-crier spoke my lines. Nor do not saw the air too much with your hand, thus, but use all gently; for in the very torrent, tempest, and, as I may say, the whirlwind of passion, you must acquire and beget a temperance that may give it smoothness. O, it offends me to the soul to hear a robustious periwig-pated[1] fellow tear a passion to tatters, to very rags, to split the ears of the groundlings,[2] who for the most part are capable of nothing but inexplicable dumb-shows and noise. I would have such a fellow whipped for o'erdoing Termagant;[3] it out-herods Herod.[4] Pray you, avoid it.

*1st Play.* I warrant your honour.

*Ham.* Be not too tame neither, but let your own discretion be your tutor. Suit the action to the word, the word to the action, with this special observance, that you o'erstep not the modesty of nature; for anything so overdone is from[5] the purpose of playing, whose end, both at the first and now, was and is, to hold, as 'twere, the mirror up to nature; to show virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time his form and pressure.[6] Now this overdone, or come tardy off,[7] though it make the unskilful laugh, cannot but make the judicious grieve; the censure of the which one[8] must in your allowance o'erweigh a whole theatre of others. O, there be players that I have seen play, and heard others praise, and that highly, not to speak it profanely, that, neither having the accent of Christians nor the gait of Christian, pagan, nor man, have so strutted and bellowed that I have thought some of nature's journeymen had made men and not made them well, they imitated humanity so abominably.

*1st Play.* I hope we have reformed that indifferently[9] with us, sir.

*Ham.* O, reform it altogether. And let those that play your clowns speak no more than is set down for them; for there be of them that will themselves laugh, to set on some quantity of barren spectators to laugh too; though, in the mean time, some necessary question of the play be then to be considered. That's villainous, and shows a most pitiful ambition in the fool that uses it. Go, make you ready.

[*Exeunt* Players

*Enter* Polonius, Rosencrantz, *and* Guildenstern

How now, my lord! Will the king hear this piece of work?

*Pol.* And the queen too, and that presently.

*Ham.* Bid the players make haste.

[*Exit* Polonius

Will you two help to hasten them?

*Rosen.*
*Guild.* We will, my lord.

[*Exeunt* Rosencrantz *and* Guildenstern

*Ham.* What ho! Horatio!

*Enter* Horatio

*Hor.* Here, sweet lord, at your service.
*Ham.* Horatio, thou art e'en as just a man
As e'er my conversation cop'd[10] withal.

---

[1] **periwig-pated:** only actors wore wigs in Shakespeare's day.

[2] **groundlings:** occupants of the pit who paid for standing room only.

[3] **Termagant:** a mythical Saracen god, represented as a noisy and violent character in the mystery and morality plays.

[4] **Herod:** Another character from the mystery plays, represented as a violent tyrant. An old stage direction reads: "*Here Erode rages in thys pagond and in the strete also.*"

[5] **from:** aside from.

[6] **pressure:** imprint.

[7] **come . . . off:** feebly acted.

[8] **censure . . . one:** the judgment of which one class, or of one such man.

[9] **indifferently:** fairly well.

[10] **cop'd:** encountered.

*Hor.* O, my dear lord,—
*Ham.* Nay, do not think I flatter;
For what advancement may I hope from thee
That no revenue hast but thy good spirits,
To feed and clothe thee? Why should the poor be flatter'd?
No, let the candi'd[1] tongue lick absurd pomp,
And crook the pregnant[2] hinges of the knee
Where thrift may follow fawning. Dost thou hear?
Since my dear soul was mistress of her choice,
And could of men distinguish, her election
Hath seal'd thee for herself; for thou hast been
As one, in suffering all, that suffers nothing,
A man that fortune's buffets and rewards
Hast ta'en with equal thanks. And blest are those
Whose blood and judgment[3] are so well commingled
That they are not a pipe for fortune's finger
To sound what stop she please. Give me that man
That is not passion's slave, and I will wear him
In my heart's core, ay, in my heart of heart,
As I do thee.—Something too much of this.
There is a play to-night before the king:
One scene of it comes near the circumstance
Which I have told thee of my father's death.
I prithee, when thou seest that act afoot,
Even with the very comment of thy soul[4]
Observe mine uncle. If his occulted[5] guilt
Do not itself unkennel[6] in one speech,
It is a damned ghost that we have seen,
And my imaginations are as foul
As Vulcan's stithy.[7] Give him heedful note;
For I mine eyes will rivet to his face,
And after we will both our judgments join
In censure of his seeming.
*Hor.* Well, my lord:
If he steal aught the whilst this play is playing,
And scape detecting, I will pay the theft.
*Ham.* They are coming to the play; I must be idle:[8]
Get you a place.

*Danish march. A flourish. Enter* King, Queen, Polonius, Ophelia, Rosencrantz, Guildenstern, *and others*

*King.* How fares our cousin Hamlet?

*Ham.* Excellent, i' faith; of the chameleon's dish:[9] I eat the air, promise-crammed. You cannot feed capons so.

*King.* I have nothing with this answer, Hamlet; these words are not mine.[10]

*Ham.* No, nor mine now. [*To* Polonius.] My lord, you played once i' the university, you say?

*Pol.* That did I, my lord, and was accounted a good actor.

*Ham.* What did you enact?

*Pol.* I did enact Julius Cæsar.[11] I was killed i' the Capitol; Brutus killed me.

*Ham.* It was a brute part of him to kill so capital a calf there. Be the players ready?

*Rosen.* Ay, my lord; they stay upon your patience.

*Queen.* Come hither, my dear Hamlet, sit by me.

*Ham.* No, good mother, here's metal more attractive.

*Lying down at* Ophelia's *feet.*

*Pol.* [*to the* King]. O, ho! do you mark that?

*Oph.* You are merry, my lord.

*Ham.* Who? I?

*Oph.* Ay, my lord.

*Ham.* O God, your only jig-maker. What should a man do but be merry?

---

[1] **candi'd:** sugared, flattering.
[2] **pregnant:** ready.
[3] **blood . . . judgment:** passions and self-control.
[4] **very . . . soul:** with most intent observation.
[5] **occulted:** concealed.
[6] **unkennel:** disclose.
[7] **Vulcan's stithy:** blacksmith's shop.
[8] **be idle:** occupied with nothing in particular; or it may mean foolish.
[9] **chameleon's dish:** The chameleon was supposed to live on air.
[10] **words . . . mine:** no answer to mine.
[11] **Julius Cæsar:** a Latin tragedy on the death of Julius Cæsar was performed at Oxford in 1582.

for, look you, how cheerfully my mother looks, and my father died within these two hours.

*Oph.* Nay, 'tis twice two months, my lord.

*Ham.* So long? Nay then, let the devil wear black, for I'll have a suit of sables.[1] O heavens! Die two months ago, and not forgotten yet? Then there's hope a great man's memory may outlive his life half a year. But, by'r lady, he must build churches, then; or else shall he suffer not thinking on,[2] with the hobby-horse, whose epitaph is "For, O, for, O, the hobby-horse is forgot."[3]

*Hautboys[4] play. The dumb-show enters[5]*

*Enter a* KING *and a* QUEEN *very lovingly; the* QUEEN *embracing him, and he her. She kneels, and makes show of protestation unto him. He takes her up, and declines his head upon her neck; lays him down upon a bank of flowers. She, seeing him asleep, leaves him. Anon comes in a fellow, takes off his crown, kisses it, and pours poison in the* KING'S *ears, and exit. The* QUEEN *returns; finds the* KING *dead, and makes passionate action. The* POISONER, *with some two or three* MUTES, *comes in again, seeming to lament with her. The dead body is carried away. The* POISONER *wooes the* QUEEN *with gifts. She seems loath and unwilling awhile, but in the end accepts his love.* [*Exeunt*

*Oph.* What means this, my lord?

*Ham.* Marry, this is miching mallecho;[6] it means mischief.

*Oph.* Belike this show imports the argument of the play.

*Enter* PROLOGUE

*Ham.* We shall know by this fellow: the players cannot keep counsel; they'll tell all.

*Oph.* Will he tell us what this show meant?

*Ham.* Ay, or any show that you'll show him.

*Oph.* You are naught,[7] you are naught. I'll mark the play.

*Prologue.* For us, and for our tragedy,
Here stooping to your clemency,
We beg your hearing patiently.
[*Exit*

*Ham.* Is this a prologue, or the posy[8] of a ring?

*Oph.* 'Tis brief, my lord.

*Ham.* As woman's love.

*Enter two* PLAYERS, KING *and* QUEEN

*Player King.* Full thirty times hath Phœbus' cart gone round
Neptune's salt wash and Tellus'[9] orbed ground,
And thirty dozen moons with borrow'd sheen
About the world have times twelve thirties been
Since love our hearts and Hymen did our hands
Unite commutual in most sacred bands.

*Player Queen.* So many journeys may the sun and moon
Make us again count o'er, ere love be done!
But, woe is me, you are so sick of late.
So far from cheer and from your former state,
That I distrust you.[10] Yet, though I distrust,
Discomfort you, my lord, it nothing must:
For women's fear and love holds quantity,[11]
In neither aught, or in extremity.[12]
Now, what my love is, proof hath made you know,
And as my love is siz'd,[13] my fear is so.
Where love is great, the littlest doubts are fear;
Where little fears grow great, great love grows there.

*P. King.* 'Faith, I must leave thee, love, and shortly too,
My operant[14] powers their functions leave[15] to do·
And thou shalt live in this fair world behind,
Honour'd, belov'd, and haply one as kind
For husband shalt thou—

*P. Queen.* O, confound the rest!
Such love must needs be treason in my breast.
In second husband let me be accurst!
None wed the second but who kill'd the first.

*Ham.* [*aside*]. Wormwood! Wormwood!

*P. Queen.* The instances[16] that second marriage move
Are base respects[17] of thrift, but none of love.

---

[1] **sables:** sable fur; the dress appropriate to "settled age." See Act IV, Sc. 7, l. 81–82.

[2] **not . . . on:** not being remembered.

[3] **For . . . forgot:** An allusion to the opposition of the Puritans to the old dances of "Merrie England." The "hobby-horse" was one of the masqueraders in the Morris-dance.

[4] **Hautboys:** oboes.

[5] **dumb-show:** pantomime.

[6] **miching mallecho:** skulking mischief.

[7] **naught:** bad, naughty.

[8] **posy:** motto.

[9] **Tellus:** goddess of the earth.

[10] **distrust you:** am worried about you.

[11] **holds quantity:** preserves proportion.

[12] **in . . . extremity:** in either nothing at all or in extremes.

[13] **siz'd:** proportioned.

[14] **operant:** active.

[15] **leave:** cease.

[16] **instances:** motives.

[17] **respects:** considerations.

A second time I kill my husband dead,
When second husband kisses me in bed.
*P. King.* I do believe you think what now you speak;
But what we do determine oft we break.
Purpose is but the slave to memory,
Of violent birth, but poor validity;[1]
Which now, like fruit unripe, sticks on the tree,
But fall, unshaken, when they mellow be.
Most necessary 'tis that we forget
To pay ourselves what to ourselves is debt.
What to ourselves in passion we propose,
The passion ending, doth the purpose lose.
The violence of either grief or joy
Their own enactures[2] with themselves destroy.
Where joy most revels, grief doth most lament;
Grief joys, joy grieves, on slender accident.
This world is not for aye, nor 'tis not strange
That even our loves should with our fortunes change;
For 'tis a question left us yet to prove,
Whether love lead fortune, or else fortune love.
The great man down, you mark his favourite flies;
The poor advanc'd makes friends of enemies.
And hitherto doth love on fortune tend;
For who not needs shall never lack a friend,
And who in want a hollow friend doth try,
Directly seasons[3] him his enemy.
But, orderly to end where I begun,
Our wills and fates do so contrary run
That our devices still are overthrown.
Our thoughts are ours, their ends none of our own.
So think thou wilt no second husband wed,
But die thy thoughts when thy first lord is dead.
*P. Queen.* Nor earth to give me food, nor heaven light!
Sport and repose lock from me day and night!
To desperation turn my trust and hope!
An anchor's cheer in prison be my scope![4]
Each opposite[5] that blanks[6] the face of joy
Meet what I would have well, and it destroy!
Both here and hence pursue me lasting strife,
If, once a widow, ever I be wife!

*Ham.* If she should break it now!

*P. King.* 'Tis deeply sworn. Sweet, leave me here a while,
My spirits grow dull, and fain I would beguile
The tedious day with sleep. [*Sleeps.*
*P. Queen.* Sleep rock thy brain,
And never come mischance between us twain!
[*Exit*

*Ham.* Madam, how like you this play?

*Queen.* The lady protests too much methinks.

*Ham.* O, but she'll keep her word.

*King.* Have you heard the argument? Is there no offence in't?

*Ham.* No, no. They do but jest, poison in jest; no offence i' the world.

*King.* What do you call the play?

*Ham.* The Mouse-trap. Marry, how? Tropically.[7] This play is the image[8] of a murder done in Vienna. Gonzago is the duke's name; his wife, Baptista. You shall see anon. 'Tis a knavish piece of work, but what o' that? Your majesty and we that have free[9] souls, it touches us not. Let the galled jade[10] wince, our withers are unwrung.

*Enter* LUCIANUS

This is one Lucianus, nephew to the king.

*Oph.* You are as good as a chorus, my lord.

*Ham.* I could interpret between you and your love, if I could see the puppets[11] dallying.

*Oph.* Still better, and worse.

*Ham.* So you must take your husbands. Begin, murderer. Pox, leave thy damnable faces, and begin. Come; "The croaking raven doth bellow for revenge."[12]

*Lucianus.* Thoughts black, hands apt, drugs fit, and time agreeing;
Confederate[13] season, else no creature seeing;
Thou mixture rank, of midnight weeds collected,
With Hecate's ban[14] thrice blasted, thrice infected,
Thy natural magic and dire property,
On wholesome life usurp immediately.
[*Pours the poison into the sleeper's ear.*]

*Ham.* He poisons him i' the garden for's estate. His name's Gonzago. The story is extant, and writ in choice Italian. You shall see anon how the murderer gets the love of Gonzago's wife.

*Oph.* The king rises.

*Ham.* What, frighted with false fire!

*Queen.* How fares my lord?

*Pol.* Give o'er the play.

---

[1] **validity:** vigor.

[2] **enactures:** enactings.

[3] **seasons:** matures.

[4] **anchor's . . . scope:** An anchorite's fare in prison be my aim.

[5] **opposite:** contrary.

[6] **blanks:** blanches, makes pale.

[7] **tropically:** figuratively.

[8] **image:** representation.

[9] **free:** innocent.

[10] **jade:** horse. The expression is proverbial.

[11] **puppets:** an allusion to the interpreter of a puppet show.

[12] **The . . . revenge:** from an old play on Richard III.

[13] **confederate:** opportune.

[14] **ban:** curse.

*King.* Give me some light! Away!
*All.* Lights, lights, lights!
[*Exeunt all but* HAMLET *and* HORATIO

*Ham.* *Why, let the strucken deer go weep,*
*The hart ungalled play,*
*For some must watch, while some must sleep;*
*So runs the world away.*

Would not this, sir, and a forest of feathers[1]—if the rest of my fortunes turn Turk[2] with me—with two Provincial roses[3] on my razed[4] shoes, get me a fellowship in a cry[5] of players, sir?

*Hor.* Half a share.[6]

*Ham.* A whole one, I.
*For thou dost know, O Damon dear,*
*This realm dismantled was*
*Of Jove himself; and now reigns here*
*A very, very*—pajock.[7]

*Hor.* You might have rhymed.

*Ham.* O good Horatio, I'll take the ghost's word for a thousand pound. Didst perceive?

*Hor.* Very well, my lord.

*Ham.* Upon the talk of the poisoning?

*Hor.* I did very well note him.

*Ham.* Ah, ha! Come, some music! Come, the recorders![8]
*For if the king not like the comedy,*
*Why then, belike, he likes it not, perdy.*[9]
Come, some music!

*Reënter* ROSENCRANTZ *and* GUILDENSTERN

*Guild.* Good my lord, vouchsafe me a word with you.

*Ham.* Sir, a whole history.

*Guild.* The king, sir,—

*Ham.* Ay, sir, what of him?

*Guild.* Is in his retirement marvellous distemper'd.

*Ham.* With drink, sir?

*Guild.* No, my lord, rather with choler.[10]

*Ham.* Your wisdom should show itself more richer to signify this to his doctor; for, for me to put him to his purgation[11] would perhaps plunge him into far more choler.

*Guild.* Good my lord, put your discourse into some frame,[12] and start not so wildly from my affair.

*Ham.* I am tame, sir. Pronounce.

*Guild.* The queen, your mother, in most great affliction of spirit, hath sent me to you.

*Ham.* You are welcome.

*Guild.* Nay, good my lord, this courtesy is not of the right breed. If it shall please you to make me a wholesome answer, I will do your mother's commandment; if not, your pardon and my return shall be the end of my business.

*Ham.* Sir, I cannot.

*Guild.* What, my lord?

*Ham.* Make you a wholesome answer; my wit's diseased. But, sir, such answer as I can make, you shall command; or, rather, as you say, my mother. Therefore, no more, but to the matter; my mother, you say,—

*Rosen.* Then thus she says: your behaviour hath struck her into amazement and admiration.[13]

*Ham.* O wonderful son, that can so astonish a mother! But is there no sequel at the heels of this mother's admiration? Impart.

*Rosen.* She desires to speak with you in her closet, ere you go to bed.

*Ham.* We shall obey, were she ten times our mother. Have you any further trade with us?

*Rosen.* My lord, you once did love me.

*Ham.* So I do still, by these pickers and stealers.[14]

*Rosen.* Good my lord, what is your cause of distemper? You do, surely, bar the door upon your own liberty, if you deny your griefs to your friend.

*Ham.* Sir, I lack advancement.

---

[1] **feathers:** the actor's feathers.
[2] **turn Turk:** decline to the worst imaginable state.
[3] **roses:** rosettes.
[4] **razed:** slashed.
[5] **cry:** company, pack.
[6] **share:** Players were paid by shares in the theatre.
[7] **pajock:** peacock.
[8] **recorders:** kind of flageolet
[9] **perdy:** par dieu.
[10] **choler:** anger.
[11] **purgation:** used in the ecclesiastical as well as medical sense.
[12] **frame:** order.
[13] **admiration:** wonder.
[14] **pickers and stealers:** hands.

*Rosen.* How can that be, when you have the voice of the king himself for your succession in Denmark?

*Ham.* Ay, sir, but, "While the grass grows,"[1]—the proverb is something musty.

*Reënter* Players *with Recorders*

O, the recorders! Let me see one. To withdraw with you[2]:—why do you go about to recover the wind[3] of me, as if you would drive me into a toil?[4]

*Guild.* O, my lord, if my duty be too bold, my love is too unmannerly.

*Ham.* I do not well understand that. Will you play upon this pipe?

*Guild.* My lord, I cannot.

*Ham.* I pray you.

*Guild.* Believe me, I cannot.

*Ham.* I do beseech you.

*Guild.* I know no touch of it, my lord.

*Ham.* 'Tis as easy as lying. Govern these ventages[5] with your fingers and thumb, give it breath with your mouth, and it will discourse most eloquent music. Look you, these are the stops.

*Guild.* But these cannot I command to any utterance of harmony; I have not the skill.

*Ham.* Why, look you now, how unworthy a thing you make of me! You would play upon me; you would seem to know my stops; you would pluck out the heart of my mystery; you would sound me from my lowest note to the top of my compass. And there is much music, excellent voice, in this little organ; yet cannot you make it speak. 'Sblood, do you think I am easier to be played on than a pipe? Call me what instrument you will, though you can fret me, yet you cannot play upon me.—

*Enter* Polonius

God bless you, sir!

*Pol.* My lord, the queen would speak with you, and presently.[6]

*Ham.* Do you see that cloud that's almost in shape of a camel?

*Pol.* By the mass, and 'tis like a camel, indeed.

*Ham.* Methinks it is like a weasel.

*Pol.* It is backed like a weasel.

*Ham.* Or like a whale?

*Pol.* Very like a whale.

*Ham.* Then I will come to my mother by and by.—They fool me to the top of my bent.[7]—I will come by and by.

*Pol.* I will say so.

*Ham.* By and by is easily said.— [*Exit* Polonius

Leave me, friends.— [*Exeunt all but* Hamlet

'Tis now the very witching time of night,
When churchyards yawn and hell itself breathes out
Contagion to this world. Now could I drink hot blood,
And do such bitter business as the day
Would quake to look on. Soft! now to my mother.
O heart, lose not thy nature; let not ever
The soul of Nero[8] enter this firm bosom.
Let me be cruel, not unnatural.
I will speak daggers to her, but use none,
My tongue and soul in this be hypocrites,—
How in my words soever she be shent,[9]
To give them seals[10] never, my soul, consent! [*Exit*

### Scene III

*A Room in the Castle*

*Enter* King, Rosencrantz, *and* Guildenstern

*King.* I like him not, nor stands it safe with us
To let his madness range. Therefore prepare you;
I your commission will forthwith dispatch,
And he to England shall along with you.
The terms[11] of our estate may not endure

---

[1] **while . . . grows:** "While grass doth growe, the silly horse he sterves (starves)."

[2] **withdraw . . . you:** Come aside. [So that the actors will not overhear.]

[3] **recover the wind:** a hunting term; get on the windward side.

[4] **toil:** net or snare; *usually in the plural.*

[5] **ventages:** the flute stops.

[6] **presently:** at once.

[7] **top . . . bent:** to the limit.

[8] **Nero:** Nero murdered his mother Agrippina.

[9] **shent:** rebuked.

[10] **give . . . seals:** seal his words by action.

[11] **terms:** responsibilities.

Hazard so dangerous as doth hourly grow
Out of his lunacies.
*Guild.* We will ourselves provide.
Most holy and religious fear it is
To keep those many many bodies safe
That live and feed upon your majesty.
*Rosen.* The single and peculiar[1] life is bound,
With all the strength and armour of the mind,
To keep itself from noyance;[2] but much more
That spirit upon whose weal depends and rests
The lives of many. The cease[3] of majesty
Dies not alone; but, like a gulf,[4] doth draw
What's near it with it. It is a massy wheel,
Fix'd on the summit of the highest mount,
To whose huge spokes ten thousand lesser things
Are mortis'd and adjoin'd; which, when it falls,
Each small annexment, petty consequence,
Attends the boisterous[5] ruin. Never alone
Did the king sigh, but with a general groan.
*King.* Arm you,[6] I pray you, to this speedy voyage;
For we will fetters put upon this fear,[7]
Which now goes too free-footed.
*Rosen.* }
*Guild.* } We will haste us.
[*Exeunt* ROSENCRANTZ *and* GUILDENSTERN

*Enter* POLONIUS

*Pol.* My lord, he's going to his mother's closet.
Behind the arras[8] I'll convey myself,
To hear the process;[9] I'll warrant she'll tax him home;[10]
And, as you said, and wisely was it said,
'Tis meet that some more audience than a mother,
Since nature makes them partial, should o'erhear
The speech, of vantage.[11] Fare you well, my liege:
I'll call upon you ere you go to bed,
And tell you what I know.
*King.* Thanks, dear my lord.
[*Exit* POLONIUS

O, my offence is rank, it smells to heaven;
It hath the primal eldest curse upon't,
A brother's murder. Pray can I not,
Though inclination be as sharp as will.
My stronger guilt defeats my strong intent,
And, like a man to double business bound,
I stand in pause where I shall first begin,
And both neglect. What if this cursed hand
Were thicker than itself with brother's blood?
Is there not rain enough in the sweet heavens
To wash it white as snow? Whereto serves mercy
But to confront the visage of offence?
And what's in prayer but this twofold force,
To be forestalled ere we come to fall,
Or pardon'd being down? Then I'll look up;
My fault is past. But, O, what form of prayer
Can serve my turn? "Forgive me my foul murder,"—
That cannot be, since I am still possess'd
Of those effects for which I did the murder,
My crown, mine own ambition, and my queen.
May one be pardon'd and retain the offence?[12]
In the corrupted currents[13] of this world
Offence's gilded hand may shove by justice,

---

[1] **peculiar:** individual.
[2] **noyance:** injury.
[3] **cease:** death, surcease.
[4] **gulf:** whirlpool.
[5] **boisterous:** violent.
[6] **arm you:** prepare.
[7] **fear:** cause of fear.
[8] **arras:** hangings of tapestry
[9] **process:** proceedings.
[10] **tax . . . home:** reprove him soundly.
[11] **of vantage:** from a place of vantage.
[12] **offence:** that which was won by the offence.
[13] **currents:** courses.

And oft ’tis seen the wicked prize itself
Buys out the law. But ’tis not so above;
There is no shuffling, there the action lies
In his true nature; and we ourselves compell’d,
Even to the teeth and forehead of our faults,
To give in evidence. What then? What rests?[1]
Try what repentance can. What can it not?
Yet what can it when one cannot repent?
O wretched state! O bosom black as death!
O limed[2] soul, that, struggling to be free,
Art more engag’d![3] Help, angels! Make assay![4]
Bow, stubborn knees, and, heart with strings of steel,
Be soft as sinews of the new-born babe!
All may be well. [*Retires and kneels.*

*Enter* HAMLET

*Ham.* Now might I do it pat, now he is praying,
And now I’ll do’t. And so he goes to heaven;
And so am I reveng’d. That would[5] be scann’d:
A villain kills my father; and for that,
I, his sole son, do this same villain send
To heaven!
O, this is hire and salary,[6] not revenge
He took my father grossly, full of bread,
With all his crimes[7] broad blown, as fresh as May,
And how his audit stands who knows save heaven?
But in our circumstance[8] and course of thought,
’Tis heavy with him; and am I then reveng’d,
To take him in the purging of his soul,
When he is fit and season’d for his passage?
No!
Up, sword, and know thou a more horrid hent:[9]
When he is drunk asleep, or in his rage,
Or in the incestuous pleasure of his bed;
At gaming, swearing, or about some act
That has no relish of salvation in’t;
Then trip him, that his heels may kick at heaven,
And that his soul may be as damn’d and black
As hell, whereto it goes. My mother stays.
This physic[10] but prolongs thy sickly days. [*Exit*

*King* [*rising*]. My words fly up, my thoughts remain below;
Words without thoughts never to heaven go. [*Exit*

### SCENE IV

### *The Queen’s Closet*

*Enter* QUEEN *and* POLONIUS

*Pol.* He will come straight. Look you lay home to him.
Tell him his pranks have been too broad to bear with,
And that your grace hath screen’d and stood between
Much heat and him. I’ll silence me even here.
Pray you, be round with him.

*Ham.* [*within*]. Mother, mother, mother!

*Queen.* I’ll warrant you,
Fear me not. Withdraw, I hear him coming.

POLONIUS *hides behind the arras.*

*Enter* HAMLET

*Ham.* Now, mother, what’s the matter?

*Queen.* Hamlet, thou hast thy father much offended.

*Ham.* Mother, you have my father much offended.

---

[1] rests: remains.

[2] limed: caught, snared.

[3] engag’d: entangled.

[4] assay: trial.

[5] would: should.

[6] hire . . . salary: merely hired or paid assassination.

[7] crimes: sins.

[8] circumstance: point of view.

[9] hent: grasp.

[10] physic: He means this delay of his will act like a medicine which merely prolongs the fatal end.

*Queen.* Come, come, you answer with an idle tongue.
*Ham.* Go, go, you question with a wicked tongue.
*Queen.* Why, how now, Hamlet!
*Ham.* What's the matter now?
*Queen.* Have you forgot me?
*Ham.* No, by the rood,[1] not so:
You are the queen, your husband's brother's wife;
And—would it were not so!—you are my mother.
*Queen.* Nay, then, I'll set those to you that can speak.
*Ham.* Come, come, and sit you down. You shall not budge;
You go not till I set you up a glass
Where you may see the inmost part of you.
*Queen.* What wilt thou do? Thou wilt not murder me?
Help, help, ho!
*Pol.* [*behind*]. What, ho! Help, help, help!
*Ham.* [*drawing*]. How now! A rat? Dead, for a ducat, dead! [*Makes a pass through the arras.*]
*Pol.* [*behind*]. O, I am slain! [*Falls and dies.*]
*Queen.* O me, what hast thou done?
*Ham.* Nay, I know not.
Is it the king?
*Queen.* O, what a rash and bloody deed is this!
*Ham.* A bloody deed! Almost as bad, good mother,
As kill a king, and marry with his brother.
*Queen.* As kill a king!
*Ham.* Ay, lady, 'twas my word.
[*Lifts up the arras and discovers* POLONIUS.]
Thou wretched, rash, intruding fool, farewell!
I took thee for thy better; take thy fortune.
Thou find'st to be too busy is some danger.
Leave wringing of your hands. Peace! Sit you down,
And let me wring your heart; for so I shall,
If it be made of penetrable stuff,
If damned custom have not braz'd it so
That it is proof and bulwark against sense.
*Queen.* What have I done, that thou darest wag thy tongue
In noise so rude against me?
*Ham.* Such an act
That blurs the grace and blush of modesty,
Calls virtue hypocrite, takes off the rose
From the fair forehead of an innocent love
And sets a blister there, makes marriage-vows
As false as dicers' oaths; O, such a deed
As from the body of contraction[2] plucks
The very soul, and sweet religion makes
A rhapsody of words. Heaven's face doth glow,[3]
Yea, this solidity and compound mass,[4]
With tristful visage, as against the doom
Is thought-sick at the act.
*Queen.* Ay me, what act
That roars so loud, and thunders in the index?[5]
*Ham.* Look here, upon this picture, and on this,
The counterfeit presentment of two brothers.
See, what a grace was seated on this brow;
Hyperion's[6] curls; the front[7] of Jove himself;
An eye like Mars, to threaten and command;
A station[8] like the herald Mercury
New-lighted on a heaven-kissing hill;
A combination and a form indeed,
Where every god did seem to set his seal,
To give the world assurance of a man.
This was your husband. Look you now, what follows.
Here is your husband; like a mildew'd ear,
Blasting his wholesome brother. Have you eyes?
Could you on this fair mountain leave to feed,

---

[1] **rood:** cross.

[2] **contraction:** the marriage contract.

[3] **doth glow:** i.e., with indignation.

[4] **mass:** the earth.

[5] **index:** prologue.

[6] **Hyperion's:** identified with Apollo.

[7] **front:** forehead.

[8] **station:** posture.

And batten[1] on this moor? Ha! have you eyes?
You cannot call it love; for at your age
The hey-day in the blood is tame, it's humble,
And waits upon the judgment: and what judgment
Would step from this to this? Sense, sure, you have,
Else could you not have motion. But sure, that sense
Is apoplex'd; for madness would not err,
Nor sense to ecstasy[2] was ne'er so thrall'd
But it reserv'd some quantity of choice,
To serve in such a difference. What devil was't
That thus hath cozen'd you at hoodman-blind[3]?
Eyes without feeling, feeling without sight,
Ears without hands or eyes, smelling sans[4] all,
Or but a sickly part of one true sense
Could not so mope.[5]
O shame, where is thy blush? Rebellious hell,
If thou canst mutine[6] in a matron's bones,
To flaming youth let virtue be as wax,
And melt in her own fire. Proclaim no shame
When the compulsive ardour gives the charge,
Since frost itself as actively doth burn
And reason panders will.[7]

*Queen.* O Hamlet, speak no more.
Thou turn'st mine eyes into my very soul,
And there I see such black and grained[8] spots
As will not leave their tinct.[9]

*Ham.* Nay, but to live
Stew'd in corruption, honeying and making love—

*Queen.* O, speak to me no more.
These words, like daggers, enter in mine ears;
No more, sweet Hamlet!

*Ham.* A murderer and a villain;
A slave that is not twentieth part the tithe
Of your precedent lord; a vice[10] of kings;
A cutpurse of the empire and the rule,
That from a shelf the precious diadem stole,
And put it in his pocket!

*Queen.* No more!

*Ham.* A king of shreds and patches,—

*Enter* GHOST

Save me, and hover o'er me with your wings,
You heavenly guards!—What would your gracious figure?

*Queen.* Alas, he's mad!

*Ham.* Do you not come your tardy son to chide,
That, laps'd[11] in time and passion, lets go by
The important[12] acting of your dread command?
O, say!

*Ghost.* Do not forget. This visitation
Is but to whet thy almost blunted purpose.
But, look, amazement on thy mother sits;
O, step between her and her fighting soul.
Conceit[13] in weakest bodies strongest works;
Speak to her, Hamlet.

*Ham.* How is it with you, lady?

*Queen.* Alas, how is't with you,
That you do bend your eye on vacancy,
And with the incorporal[14] air do hold discourse?
Forth at your eyes your spirits wildly peep;
And, as the sleeping soldiers in the alarm,
Your bedded hair, like life in excrements,[15]

---

[1] **batten:** fatten.
[2] **ecstasy:** madness.
[3] **hoodman-blind:** blind-man's buff.
[4] **sans:** without.
[5] **mope:** be stupid.
[6] **mutine:** mutiny.
[7] **reason . . . will:** reason is controlled by desire.
[8] **black . . . grained:** dyed in grain.
[9] **leave . . . tinct:** part with their color.
[10] **vice:** a clown trying to play the part of king (a Vice in the morality plays).
[11] **laps'd:** "having suffered time to slip and passion to cool."—JOHNSON.
[12] **important:** urgent.
[13] **conceit:** imagination.
[14] **incorporal:** incorporeal.
[15] **excrements:** outgrowths; hair.

Starts up, and stands an[1] end. O gentle son,
Upon the heat and flame of thy distemper
Sprinkle cool patience. Whereon do you look?

*Ham.* On him, on him! Look you, how pale he glares!
His form and cause conjoin'd, preaching to stones,
Would make them capable.[2]—Do not look upon me,
Lest with this piteous action you convert
My stern effects.[3] Then what I have to do
Will want true colour; tears perchance for blood.

*Queen.* To whom do you speak this?

*Ham.* Do you see nothing there?

*Queen.* Nothing at all; yet all that is I see.

*Ham.* Nor did you nothing hear?

*Queen.* No, nothing but ourselves.

*Ham.* Why, look you there! Look, how it steals away!
My father, in his habit as he liv'd!
Look, where he goes, even now, out at the portal! [*Exit* GHOST

*Queen.* This is the very coinage of your brain;
This bodiless creation ecstasy[4]
Is very cunning in.

*Ham.* Ecstasy!
My pulse, as yours, doth temperately keep time,
And makes as healthful music. It is not madness
That I have utter'd. Bring me to the test,
And I the matter will re-word; which madness
Would gambol from. Mother, for love of grace,
Lay not that flattering unction to your soul,
That not your trespass, but my madness speaks.
It will but skin and film the ulcerous place,
Whilst rank corruption, mining all within,
Infects unseen. Confess yourself to heaven;
Repent what's past; avoid what is to come;
And do not spread the compost on the weeds,
To make them ranker. Forgive me this my virtue[5];
For in the fatness of these pursy[6] times
Virtue itself of vice must pardon beg,
Yea, curb[7] and woo for leave to do him good.

*Queen.* O Hamlet, thou hast cleft my heart in twain.

*Ham.* O, throw away the worser part of it,
And live the purer with the other half.
Good night. But go not to mine uncle's bed;
Assume a virtue, if you have it not.
That monster, custom, who all sense[8] doth eat,
Of habits devil, is angel yet in this,—
That to the use of actions fair and good
He likewise gives a frock or livery,
That aptly is put on. Refrain to-night,
And that shall lend a kind of easiness
To the next abstinence; the next more easy;
For use almost can change the stamp of nature,
And either master the devil, or throw him out
With wondrous potency. Once more, good night.
And when you are desirous to be bless'd,
I'll blessing beg of you. For this same lord,
[*Pointing to* POLONIUS.]
I do repent; but heaven hath pleas'd it so,
To punish me with this and this with me,
That I must be their[9] scourge and minister.
I will bestow him, and will answer well
The death I gave him. So, again, good night.
I must be cruel, only to be kind.

---

[1] **an:** on.
[2] **capable:** i.e., of feeling.
[3] **effects:** purposes.
[4] **ecstasy:** madness.
[5] **virtue:** virtuous candour.
[6] **pursy:** corpulent; self-indulgent.
[7] **curb:** bow.
[8] **sense:** sensitiveness; conscience.
[9] **their:** refers to heaven.

Thus bad begins and worse remains behind.
One word more, good lady.
*Queen.* What shall I do?
*Ham.* Not this, by no means, that I bid you do:
Let the bloat king tempt you again to bed;
Pinch wanton on your cheek; call you his mouse;
And let him, for a pair of reechy[1] kisses,
Or paddling in your neck with his damn’d fingers,
Make you to ravel all this matter out,
That I essentially am not in madness,
But mad in craft. ’Twere good you let him know;
For who, that’s but a queen, fair, sober, wise,
Would from a paddock,[2] from a bat, a gib,[3]
Such dear concernings hide? Who would do so?
No, in despite of sense and secrecy,
Unpeg the basket on the house’s top,
Let the birds fly, and, like the famous ape,[4]
To try conclusions,[5] in the basket creep,
And break your own neck down.
*Queen.* Be thou assur’d, if words be made of breath,
And breath of life, I have no life to breathe
What thou hast said to me.
*Ham.* I must to England; you know that?
*Queen.* Alack,
I had forgot. ’Tis so concluded on.
*Ham.* There’s letters seal’d; and my two school-fellows,
Whom I will trust as I will adders fang’d,
They bear the mandate; they must sweep my way,
And marshal me to knavery. Let it work;
For ’tis the sport to have the enginer
Hoist with his own petar[6]; and’t shall go hard
But I will delve one yard below their mines,
And blow them at[7] the moon: O, ’tis most sweet,
When in one line two crafts[8] directly meet.
This man shall set me packing.[9]
I’ll lug the guts into the neighbour room.
Mother, good night. Indeed this counsellor
Is now most still, most secret and most grave,
Who was in life a foolish prating knave.—
Come, sir, to draw toward an end with you.—
Good night, mother.
[*Exeunt severally;* HAMLET *dragging in* POLONIUS

## ACT IV

### SCENE I

*A Room in the Castle*

*Enter* KING, QUEEN, ROSENCRANTZ, *and* GUILDENSTERN

*King.* There’s matter in these sighs; these profound heaves
You must translate. ’Tis fit we understand them.
Where is your son?
*Queen.* Bestow this place on us a little while.
[*Exeunt* ROSENCRANTZ *and* GUILDENSTERN]
Ah, my good lord, what have I seen to-night!
*King.* What, Gertrude? How does Hamlet?
*Queen.* Mad as the sea and wind, when both contend
Which is the mightier. In his lawless fit,
Behind the arras hearing something stir,
Whips out his rapier, cries, “A rat, a rat,”
And in this brainish[10] apprehension kills
The unseen good old man.
*King.* O heavy deed!
It had been so with us, had we been there.
His liberty is full of threats to all,

---

[1] **reechy:** vile.

[2] **paddock:** toad.

[3] **gib:** cat.

[4] **famous ape:** This story has not been handed down to us.

[5] **conclusions:** experiments.

[6] **Hoist . . . petar:** blown up with his own explosive.

[7] **at:** up to.

[8] **two crafts:** the King’s craft and his.

[9] **packing:** hurrying.

[10] **brainish:** brainsick.

To you yourself, to us, to every one.
Alas, how shall this bloody deed be answer'd[1]?
It will be laid to us, whose providence
Should have kept short,[2] restrain'd and out of haunt,
This mad young man. But so much was our love,
We would not understand what was most fit,
But, like the owner of a foul disease,
To keep it from divulging,[3] let it feed
Even on the pith of life. Where is he gone?

*Queen.* To draw apart the body he hath kill'd;
O'er whom his very madness, like some ore
Among a mineral[4] of metals base,
Shows itself pure. He weeps for what is done.

*King.* O Gertrude, come away!
The sun no sooner shall the mountains touch,
But we will ship him hence; and this vile deed
We must, with all our majesty and skill,
Both countenance and excuse.—Ho, Guildenstern!

*Enter* Rosencrantz *and* Guildenstern

Friends both, go join you with some further aid.
Hamlet in madness hath Polonius slain,
And from his mother's closet hath he dragg'd him.
Go seek him out. Speak fair, and bring the body
Into the chapel. I pray you, haste in this.
[*Exeunt* Rosencrantz *and* Guildenstern]

Come, Gertrude, we'll call up our wisest friends,
And let them know, both what we mean to do,
And what's untimely done; so, haply slander,—
Whose whisper o'er the world's diameter,
As level as the cannon to his blank,[5]
Transports his poison'd shot, may miss our name,
And hit the woundless air. O, come away!
My soul is full of discord and dismay.
[*Exeunt*

### Scene II

*Another Room in the Castle*

*Enter* Hamlet

*Ham.* Safely stowed.

*Rosen.*, *Guild.* [*within*]. Hamlet! Lord Hamlet!

*Ham.* What noise? Who calls on Hamlet? O, here they come.

*Enter* Rosencrantz *and* Guildenstern

*Rosen.* What have you done, my lord, with the dead body?

*Ham.* Compounded it with dust, whereto 'tis kin.

*Rosen.* Tell us where 'tis, that we may take it thence
And bear it to the chapel.

*Ham.* Do not believe it.

*Rosen.* Believe what?

*Ham.* That I can keep your counsel and not mine own. Besides, to be demanded of a sponge, what replication[6] should be made by the son of a king?

*Rosen.* Take you me for a sponge, my lord?

*Ham.* Ay, sir, that soaks up the king's countenance,[7] his rewards, his authorities. But such officers do the king best service in the end. He keeps them, like an ape, in the corner of his jaw, first mouthed, to be last swallowed. When he needs what you have gleaned, it is but squeezing you, and, sponge, you shall be dry again.

*Rosen.* I understand you not, my lord.

*Ham.* I am glad of it: a knavish speech sleeps in a foolish ear.

*Rosen.* My lord, you must tell us where the body is, and go with us to the king.

---

[1] **be answer'd:** accounted for.
[2] **kept short:** under control.
[3] **divulging:** being divulged.
[4] **mineral:** mine
[5] **blank:** mark.
[6] **replication:** reply.
[7] **countenance:** favour.

*Ham.* The body is with the king, but the king is not with the body.[1] The king is a thing—

*Guild.* A thing, my lord!

*Ham.* Of nothing. Bring me to him. Hide fox, and all after.[2] [*Exeunt*

## SCENE III

### *Another Room in the Castle*

*Enter* KING, *attended*

*King.* I have sent to seek him, and to find the body.
How dangerous is it that this man goes loose!
Yet must not we put the strong law on him;
He's loved of the distracted multitude,
Who like not in their judgment, but their eyes:
And where 'tis so, the offender's scourge[3] is weigh'd,
But never the offence. To bear all smooth and even,
This sudden sending him away must seem
Deliberate pause.[4] Diseases desperate grown
By desperate appliance are reliev'd,
Or not at all.

*Enter* ROSENCRANTZ

How now! What hath befall'n?

*Rosen.* Where the dead body is bestow'd, my lord,
We cannot get from him.

*King.* But where is he?

*Rosen.* Without, my lord; guarded, to know your pleasure.

*King.* Bring him before us.

*Rosen.* Ho, Guildenstern! Bring in my lord.

*Enter* HAMLET *and* GUILDENSTERN

*King.* Now, Hamlet, where's Polonius?

*Ham.* At supper.

*King.* At supper! Where?

*Ham.* Not where he eats, but where he is eaten: a certain convocation of politic worms[5] are e'en at him. Your worm is your only emperor for diet. We fat all creatures else to fat us, and we fat ourselves for maggots. Your fat king and your lean beggar is but variable service, two dishes, but to one table; that's the end.

*King.* Alas, alas!

*Ham.* A man may fish with the worm that hath eat of a king, and eat of the fish that hath fed of that worm.

*King.* What dost thou mean by this?

*Ham.* Nothing but to show you how a king may go a progress through the guts of a beggar.

*King.* Where is Polonius?

*Ham.* In heaven. Send thither to see. If your messenger find him not there, seek him i' the other place yourself. But indeed, if you find him not within this month, you shall nose him as you go up the stairs into the lobby.

*King* [*to some* Attendants]. Go seek him there.

*Ham.* He will stay till ye come.
[*Exeunt* Attendants

*King.* Hamlet, this deed, for thine especial safety,—
Which we do tender,[6] as we dearly grieve
For that which thou hast done,—must send thee hence
With fiery quickness; therefore prepare thyself.
The bark is ready, and the wind at help,
The associates tend,[7] and every thing is bent
For England.

*Ham.* For England!

*King.* Ay, Hamlet.

*Ham.* Good.

*King.* So is it, if thou knew'st our purposes.

*Ham.* I see a cherub that sees them. But, come; for England! Farewell, dear mother.

*King.* Thy loving father, Hamlet.

*Ham.* My mother; father and mother is man and wife; man and wife is one flesh; and so, my mother. Come, for England! [*Exit*

---

[1] body . . . body: Hamlet is talking nonsense to baffle them. Perhaps he means: King Claudius is with his body, of course; but the kingly qualities are not.

[2] hide . . . after: probably from Hide-and-Seek.

[3] scourge: punishment.

[4] deliberate pause: the result of deliberation.

[5] politic worms: such worms as would feed on the body of a politician; with perhaps an allusion to the Diet of Worms.

[6] do tender: have regard for.

[7] tend: attend.

*King.* Follow him at foot[1]; tempt him with speed abroad.
Delay it not. I'll have him hence to-night.
Away! for every thing is seal'd and done
That else leans[2] on the affair. Pray you, make haste.
[*Exeunt* Rosencrantz *and* Guildenstern]
And, England, if my love thou hold'st at aught—
As my great power thereof may give thee sense,
Since yet thy cicatrice looks raw and red
After the Danish sword, and thy free awe
Pays homage[3] to us—thou mayst not coldly set[4]
Our sovereign process; which imports at full,
By letters conjuring to that effect,
The present death of Hamlet. Do it, England;
For like the hectic[5] in my blood he rages,
And thou must cure me. Till I know 'tis done,
Howe'er my haps,[6] my joys were ne'er begun. [*Exit*

## SCENE IV

*A Plain in Denmark*

*Enter* Fortinbras, *a* Captain, *and* Soldiers, *marching*

*Fortinbras.* Go, captain, from me greet the Danish king.
Tell him that, by his license, Fortinbras
Claims the conveyance of a promis'd march
Over his kingdom. You know the rendezvous.
If that his majesty would aught with us,
We shall express our duty in his eye;[7]
And let him know so.
*Captain.* I will do't, my lord.
*For.* Go softly on.
[*Exeunt* Fortinbras *and* Soldiers

*Enter* Hamlet, Rosencrantz, Guildenstern, *and Others*

*Ham.* Good sir, whose powers are these?
*Cap.* They are of Norway, sir.
*Ham.* How purpos'd, sir, I pray you?
*Cap.* Against some part of Poland.
*Ham.* Who commands them, sir?
*Cap.* The nephew to old Norway, Fortinbras.
*Ham.* Goes it against the main[8] of Poland, sir,
Or for some frontier?
*Cap.* Truly to speak, and with no addition,
We go to gain a little patch of ground
That hath in it no profit but the name.
To pay five ducats, five, I would not farm it;
Nor will it yield to Norway or the Pole
A ranker[9] rate, should it be sold in fee.
*Ham.* Why, then the Polack never will defend it.
*Cap.* Yes, it is already garrison'd.
*Ham.* Two thousand souls and twenty thousand ducats
Will not debate the question of this straw.
This is the imposthume[10] of much wealth and peace,
That inward breaks, and shows no cause without
Why the man dies.—I humbly thank you, sir.
*Cap.* God be wi' you, sir. [*Exit*
*Rosen.* Will't please you go, my lord?
*Ham.* I'll be with you straight. Go a little before.
[*Exeunt all except* Hamlet
How all occasions do inform against me,
And spur my dull revenge! What is a man,
If his chief good and market[11] of his time
Be but to sleep and feed? A beast, no more.
Sure, he that made us with such large discourse,[12]
Looking before and after, gave us not
That capability and god-like reason

---

[1] at foot: at heels.
[2] leans: depends.
[3] free . . . homage: transferred epithet; i.e., awe pays free homage.
[4] set: regard.
[5] hectic: fever.
[6] haps: fortune.
[7] eye: presence.
[8] main: chief army.
[9] ranker: richer.
[10] imposthume: abscess.
[11] market: profit.
[12] large discourse: range of reason.

To fust[1] in us unused. Now, whether it be
Bestial oblivion, or some craven scruple
Of[2] thinking too precisely on the event,—
A thought which, quarter’d, hath but one part wisdom
And ever three parts coward, I do not know
Why yet I live to say “This thing’s to do,”
Sith[3] I have cause and will and strength and means
To do’t. Examples gross as earth exhort me.
Witness this army of such mass and charge
Led by a delicate and tender prince,
Whose spirit with divine ambition puff’d
Makes mouths[4] at the invisible event,
Exposing what is mortal and unsure
To all that fortune, death and danger dare,
Even for an egg-shell. Rightly to be great
Is not to stir without great argument,[5]
But greatly to find quarrel in a straw
When honour’s at the stake. How stand I then,
That have a father kill’d, a mother stain’d,
Excitements of my reason and my blood
And let all sleep, while, to my shame, I see
The imminent death of twenty thousand men,
That, for a fantasy and trick[6] of fame,
Go to their graves like beds, fight for a plot[7]
Whereon the numbers cannot try the cause,
Which is not tomb enough and continent[8]
To hide the slain? O, from this time forth,
My thoughts be bloody, or be nothing worth! [*Exit*

### Scene V

*Elsinore. A Room in the Castle*

*Enter* Queen, Horatio, *and a* Gentleman

*Queen.* I will not speak with her.
*Gentleman.* She is importunate, indeed distract;
Her mood will needs be piti’d.
*Queen.* What would she have?
*Gent.* She speaks much of her father; says she hears
There’s tricks i’ the world; and hems, and beats her heart;
Spurns enviously[9] at straws; speaks things in doubt,
That carry but half sense. Her speech is nothing,
Yet the unshaped use of it doth move
The hearers to collection.[10] They aim at it,
And botch the words up fit to their own thoughts;
Which, as her winks, and nods, and gestures yield them,
Indeed would make one think there might be thought,
Though nothing sure, yet much unhappily.
*Hor.* ’Twere good she were spoken with; for she may strew
Dangerous conjectures in ill-breeding[11] minds.
*Queen.* Let her come in.— [*Exit* Horatio
To my sick soul, as sin’s true nature is,
Each toy[12] seems prologue to some great amiss.[13]
So full of artless jealousy[14] is guilt,
It spills itself in fearing to be spilt.

*Reënter* Horatio, *with* Ophelia

*Oph.* Where is the beauteous majesty of Denmark?

---

[1] fust: to grow mouldy.
[2] of: developed from.
[3] sith: since.
[4] mouths: faces.
[5] argument: issue.
[6] trick: trifle.
[7] plot: i.e., of ground.
[8] continent: receptacle.
[9] enviously: angrily.
[10] collection: understanding of it.
[11] ill-breeding: mischief-breeding.
[12] toy: trifle.
[13] amiss: calamity.
[14] jealousy: suspicion.

*Queen.* How now, Ophelia!
*Oph.* [*Sings*]. *How should I your true love know*
*From another one?*
*By his cockle hat*[1] *and staff,*
*And his sandal shoon.*

*Queen.* Alas, sweet lady, what imports this song?

*Oph.* Say you? Nay, pray you, mark.
[*Sings.*] *He is dead and gone, lady,*
*He is dead and gone;*
*At his head a grass-green turf,*
*At his heels a stone.*

*Queen.* Nay, but, Ophelia,—
*Oph.* Pray you, mark.
[*Sings.*] *White his shroud as the mountain snow,—*

*Enter* KING

*Queen.* Alas, look here, my lord.
*Oph.* [*Sings*]. *Larded*[2] *with sweet flowers;*
*Which bewept to the grave did go*
*With true-love showers.*

*King.* How do you, pretty lady?

*Oph.* Well, God 'ild[3] you! They say the owl was a baker's daughter. Lord, we know what we are, but know not what we may be. God be at your table!

*King.* Conceit upon[4] her father.

*Oph.* Pray you, let's have no words of this; but when they ask you what it means, say you this:
[*Sings.*] *To-morrow is Saint Valentine's day,*
*All in the morning betime,*
*And I a maid at your window,*
*To be your Valentine.*

*King.* Pretty Ophelia!

*Oph.* Indeed, la, without an oath, I'll make an end on't.

*King.* How long hath she been thus?

*Oph.* I hope all will be well. We must be patient; but I cannot choose but weep, to think they should lay him i' the cold ground. My brother shall know of it; and so I thank you for your good counsel. Come, my coach! Good night, ladies. Good night, sweet ladies; good night, good night. [*Exit*

*King.* Follow her close; give her good watch, I pray you. [*Exit* HORATIO
O, this is the poison of deep grief; it springs
All from her father's death. O Gertrude, Gertrude,
When sorrows come, they come not single spies,
But in battalions. First, her father slain;
Next, your son gone; and he most violent author
Of his own just remove: the people muddied,
Thick and unwholesome in their thoughts and whispers,
For good Polonius' death; and we have done but greenly,[5]
In hugger-mugger[6] to inter him: poor Ophelia
Divided from herself and her fair judgment,
Without the which we are pictures, or mere beasts.
Last, and as much containing as all these,
Her brother is in secret come from France;
Feeds on his wonder, keeps himself in clouds,[7]
And wants not buzzers[8] to infect his ear
With pestilent speeches of his father's death;
Wherein necessity, of matter beggar'd,[9]
Will nothing stick[10] our person to arraign
In ear and ear. O my dear Gertrude, this,
Like to a murdering-piece,[11] in many places
Gives me superfluous death.
*A noise within.*

*Queen.* Alack, what noise is this?
*King.* Where are my Switzers? Let them guard the door.—

*Enter another* GENTLEMAN

What is the matter?
*Gentleman.* Save yourself, my lord!
The ocean, overpeering of his list,[12]

---

[1] **cockle hat:** cockle shell in his hat (the sign of a pilgrim).

[2] **Larded:** garnished.

[3] **'ild:** yield (reward).

[4] **conceit upon:** imaginings about.

[5] **greenly:** foolishly.

[6] **hugger-mugger:** secretly and without due ceremony.

[7] **keeps . . . clouds:** is mysteriouly reserved.

[8] **buzzers:** whisperers.

[9] **necessity . . . beggar'd:** need of plausible grounds, beggared of facts to support the accusation.

[10] **will . . . stick:** not hesitate.

[11] **murdering-piece:** cannon.

[12] **overpeering . . . list:** overtopping its bounds.

Eats not the flats with more impetuous haste
Than young Laertes, in a riotous head,[1]
O'erbears your officers. The rabble call him lord;
And, as the world were now but to begin,
Antiquity forgot, custom not known,
The ratifiers and props of every word,
They cry "Choose we! Laertes shall be king!"
Caps, hands, and tongues, applaud it to the clouds,—
"Laertes shall be king, Laertes king!"
*Queen.* How cheerfully on the false trail they cry!
O, this is counter,[2] you false Danish dogs!
*King.* The doors are broke.
*Noise within.*

*Enter* LAERTES *armed;* DANES *following*

*Laer.* Where is this king?—Sirs, stand you all without.
*Danes.* No, let's come in.
*Laer.* I pray you, give me leave.
*Danes.* We will, we will.
[*They retire without the door*
*Laer.* I thank you. Keep the door.—O thou vile king,
Give me my father!
*Queen.* Calmly, good Laertes.
*Laer.* That drop of blood that's calm proclaims me bastard,
Cries cuckold to my father, brands the harlot
Even here, between the chaste unsmirched brow
Of my true mother.
*King.* What is the cause, Laertes,
That thy rebellion looks so giant-like?
Let him go, Gertrude, do not fear[3] our person.
There's such divinity doth hedge[4] a king
That treason can but peep to what it would,
Acts little of his will.—Tell me, Laertes,
Why thou art thus incens'd.—Let him go, Gertrude.—
Speak, man.
*Laer.* Where's my father?
*King.* Dead.
*Queen.* But not by him.
*King.* Let him demand his fill.
*Laer.* How came he dead? I'll not be juggled with.
To hell, allegiance! Vows, to the blackest devil!
Conscience and grace, to the profoundest pit!
I dare damnation. To this point I stand,
That both the worlds I give to negligence,
Let come what comes; only I'll be reveng'd
Most throughly[5] for my father.
*King.* Who shall stay you?
*Laer.* My will, not all the world;
And for my means, I'll husband them so well,
They shall go far with little.
*King.* Good Laertes,
If you desire to know the certainty
Of your dear father's death, is't writ in your revenge,
That, swoopstake,[6] you will draw both friend and foe,
Winner and loser?
*Laer.* None but his enemies.
*King.* Will you know them then?
*Laer.* To his good friends thus wide I'll ope my arms;
And like the kind life-rendering pelican,[7]
Repast them with my blood.
*King.* Why, now you speak
Like a good child and a true gentleman.
That I am guiltless of your father's death,
And am most sensible[8] in grief for it,
It shall as level[9] to your judgment pierce
As day does to your eye.
*Danes* [*within*]. Let her come in.
*Laer.* How now! What noise is that?

*Reënter* OPHELIA

O heat, dry up my brains! Tears seven times salt,

---

[1] **riotous head:** armed force.

[2] **counter:** in the contrary direction, mistaking the right trail.

[3] **fear:** fear for.

[4] **hedge:** enclose.

[5] **throughly:** thoroughly.

[6] **swoopstake:** sweeping-the-stakes, like a gambler.

[7] **kind . . . pelican:** The old belief was that the pelican pierced its breast to feed its young.

[8] **sensible:** feelingly.

[9] **level:** straight.

Burn out the sense and virtue of mine eye!
By heaven, thy madness shall be paid by weight,
Till our scale turn the beam. O rose of May
Dear maid, kind sister, sweet Ophelia!
O heavens! Is't possible, a young maid's wits
Should be as mortal as an old man's life?
Nature is fine in love, and where 'tis fine,
It sends some precious instance[1] of itself
After the thing it loves.

*Oph.* [*sings*].
*They bore him barefac'd on the bier;*
*Hey non nonny, nonny, hey nonny;*
*And in his grave rain'd many a tear.*—
Fare you well, my dove!

*Laer.* Hadst thou thy wits, and didst persuade revenge,
It could not move thus.

*Oph.* [*sings*]. You must sing *Down a-down, and you call him a-down-a.* O, how the wheel[2] becomes it! It is the false steward that stole his master's daughter.

*Laer.* This nothing's more than matter.

*Oph.* There's rosemary, that's for remembrance; pray, love, remember: and there is pansies, that's for thoughts.

*Laer.* A document in madness, thoughts and remembrance fitted.

*Oph.* There's fennel for you, and columbines; there's rue for you; and here's some for me. We may call it herb of grace o' Sundays. O, you must wear your rue with a difference. There's a daisy. I would give you some violets, but they withered all when my father died. They say he made a good end,—
[*Sings.*] *For bonny sweet Robin is all my joy.*[3]

*Laer.* Thought and affliction, passion, hell itself,
She turns to favour and to prettiness.

*Oph.* [*sings*]. *And will he not come again?*
*And will he not come again?*
*No, no, he is dead;*
*Go to thy death-bed;*
*He never will come again.*
*His beard was white as snow,*
*All flaxen was his poll.*
*He is gone, he is gone,*
*And we cast away moan;*
*God ha' mercy on his soul!*[4]
And of all Christian souls, I pray God.
God be wi' ye.

*Laer.* Do you see this, O God?
[*Exit* Ophelia

*King.* Laertes, I must commune with your grief,
Or you deny me right. Go but apart,
Make choice of whom your wisest friends you will,
And they shall hear and judge 'twixt you and me.
If by direct or by collateral hand
They find us touch'd,[5] we will our kingdom give,
Our crown, our life, and all that we call ours,
To you in satisfaction; but if not,
Be you content to lend your patience to us,
And we shall jointly labour with your soul
To give it due content.

*Laer.* Let this be so.
His means of death,[6] his obscure burial—
No trophy, sword, nor hatchment[7] o'er his bones,
No noble rite nor formal ostentation—
Cry to be heard, as 'twere from heaven to earth,
That[8] I must call't in question.

*King.* So you shall;
And where the offence is let the great axe fall.
I pray you, go with me. [*Exeunt*

## Scene VI

*Another Room in the Castle*

*Enter* Horatio *and a* Servant

*Hor.* What are they that would speak with me?

*Servant.* Sailors, sir. They say they have letters for you.

---

[1] **instance:** token (in this case, Ophelia's sanity).

[2] **wheel:** refrain. It may be that she imagines herself at the spinning wheel.

[3] **For . . . joy:** from a ballad of Shakespeare's day.

[4] **And . . . soul:** another song of the day.

[5] **touch'd:** implicated.

[6] **means . . . death:** the means of his death.

[7] **hatchment:** escutcheon displayed on the house of the deceased, as public notice of his death; and also placed over the tomb.

[8] **that:** so that.

*Hor.* Let them come in.
[*Exit* Servant
I do not know from what part of the world
I should be greeted, if not from Lord Hamlet.

*Enter* Sailors

*1st Sailor.* God bless you, sir.
*Hor.* Let him bless thee too.
*1st Sail.* He shall, sir, an't please him. There's a letter for you, sir. It comes from the ambassador that was bound for England,—if your name be Horatio, as I am let to know it is.

*Hor.* [*reads*]. "*Horatio, when thou shalt have overlooked this, give these fellows some means to the king: they have letters for him. Ere we were two days old at sea, a pirate of very warlike appointment gave us chase. Finding ourselves too slow of sail, we put on a compelled valour. In the grapple I boarded them: on the instant they got clear of our ship; so I alone became their prisoner. They have dealt with me like thieves of mercy. But they knew what they did; I am to do a good turn for them. Let the king have the letters I have sent, and repair thou to me with as much speed as thou wouldst fly death. I have words to speak in thine ear will make thee dumb; yet are they much too light for the bore*[1] *of the matter. These good fellows will bring thee where I am. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern hold their course for England; of them I have much to tell thee. Farewell.*

"*He that thou knowest thine,*
Hamlet."

Come, I will make you way for these your letters;
And do't the speedier, that you may direct me
To him from whom you brought them.
[*Exeunt*

### Scene VII

*Another Room in the Castle*

*Enter* King *and* Laertes

*King.* Now must your conscience my acquittance[2] seal,
And you must put me in your heart for friend,
Sith you have heard, and with a knowing ear,
That he which hath your noble father slain
Pursu'd my life.
*Laer.* It well appears. But tell me
Why you proceeded not against these feats,
So crimeful and so capital in nature,
As by your safety, wisdom, all things else,
You mainly were stirr'd up.
*King.* O, for two special reasons,
Which may to you, perhaps, seem much unsinew'd,
But yet to me they are strong. The queen his mother
Lives almost by his looks; and for myself—
My virtue or my plague, be it either which[3]—
She's so conjunctive to my life and soul,
That, as the star moves not but in his sphere,
I could not but by her. The other motive,
Why to a public count[4] I might not go,
Is the great love the general gender[5] bear him,
Who, dipping all his faults in their affection,
Would, like the spring that turneth wood to stone,[6]
Convert his gyves to graces; so that my arrows,
Too slightly timber'd for so loud a wind,
Would have reverted to my bow again,
And not where I had aim'd them.
*Laer.* And so have I a noble father lost,
A sister driven into desperate terms,
Whose worth, if praises may go back again,[7]
Stood challenger on mount[8] of all the age
For her perfections. But my revenge will come.

---

[1] bore: calibre; i.e., importance.
[2] acquittance: acquittal.
[3] be . . . which: whichever it be.
[4] count: accounting.
[5] general gender: general public.
[6] spring . . . stone: Baths at King's Newnham in Warwickshire had this property.
[7] if . . . again: If I could praise her as she used to be.
[8] on mount: high.

*King.* Break not your sleep for that.
You must not think
That we are made of stuff so flat and dull
That we can let our beard be shook with danger,
And think it pastime. You shortly shall hear more.
I lov'd your father, and we love ourself;
And that, I hope, will teach you to imagine—

*Enter a* MESSENGER

How now! what news?
*Messenger.* Letters, my lord, from Hamlet:
This to your majesty; this to the queen.
*King.* From Hamlet! who brought them?
*Mes.* Sailors, my lord, they say; I saw them not:
They were given me by Claudio; he receiv'd them
Of him that brought them.
*King.* Laertes, you shall hear them.
Leave us. [*Exit* MESSENGER

[*Reads.*] "*High and mighty, You shall know I am set naked on your kingdom. To-morrow shall I beg leave to see your kingly eyes, when I shall, first asking your pardon thereunto, recount the occasion of my sudden and more strange return.*
HAMLET."

What should this mean? Are all the rest come back?
Or is it some abuse,[1] and no such thing?
*Laer.* Know you the hand?
*King.* 'Tis Hamlet's character.[2] "Naked!"
And in a postscript here, he says "alone."
Can you advise me?
*Laer.* I'm lost in it, my lord. But let him come.
It warms the very sickness in my heart
That I shall live and tell him to his teeth,
"Thus didest thou."
*King.* If it be so, Laertes—
As how should it be so, how otherwise?—
Will you be rul'd by me?
*Laer.* Ay, my lord,
So you will not o'errule me to a peace.
*King.* To thine own peace. If he be now return'd,
As checking at[3] his voyage, and that he means
No more to undertake it, I will work him
To an exploit, now ripe in my device,
Under the which he shall not choose but fall;
And for his death no wind of blame shall breathe,
But even his mother shall uncharge the practice[4]
And call it accident.
*Laer.* My lord, I will be rul'd;
The rather, if you could devise it so
That I might be the organ.
*King.* It falls right.
You have been talk'd of since your travel much,
And that in Hamlet's hearing, for a quality
Wherein, they say, you shine. Your sum of parts[5]
Did not together pluck such envy from him
As did that one, and that, in my regard,
Of the unworthiest siege.[6]
*Laer.* What part is that, my lord?
*King.* A very riband in the cap of youth,
Yet needful too; for youth no less becomes
The light and careless livery that it wears
Than settled age his sables and his weeds,
Importing health and graveness. Two months since,
Here was a gentleman of Normandy.
I've seen myself, and serv'd against, the French,
And they can well on horseback; but this gallant
Had witchcraft in't; he grew unto his seat;
And to such wondrous doing brought his horse,
As he had been incorps'd[7] and demi-natur'd

---

[1] **abuse:** deception.
[2] **character:** handwriting.
[3] **checking at:** refusing, objecting to.
[4] **uncharge . . . practice:** acquit of foul play.
[5] **your . . . parts:** all your qualities.
[6] **siege:** rank.
[7] **incorps'd:** incorporated into.

With the brave beast. So far he topp'd[1] my thought,
That I, in forgery[2] of shapes and tricks,
Come short of what he did.
*Laer.* A Norman was't?
*King.* A Norman.
*Laer.* Upon my life, Lamond.
*King.* The very same.
*Laer.* I know him well. He is the brooch indeed
And gem of all the nation.
*King.* He made confession of you,
And gave you such a masterly report,
For art and exercise in your defence,
And for your rapier most especially;
That he cried out, 'twould be a sight indeed,
If one could match you. The scrimers[3] of their nation,
He swore, had neither motion, guard, nor eye,
If you oppos'd them. Sir, this report of his
Did Hamlet so envenom with his envy
That he could nothing do but wish and beg
Your sudden coming o'er, to play with him.
Now, out of this,—
*Laer.* What out of this, my lord?
*King.* Laertes, was your father dear to you?
Or are you like the painting of a sorrow,
A face without a heart?
*Laer.* Why ask you this?
*King.* Not that I think you did not love your father,
But that I know love is begun by time,[4]
And that I see, in passages of proof,[5]
Time qualifies the spark and fire of it.
There lives within the very flame of love
A kind of wick or snuff that will abate it,
And nothing is at a like goodness still[6];
For goodness, growing to a plurisy,[7]
Dies in his own too-much. That we would do
We should do when we would; for this "would" changes
And hath abatements and delays as many
As there are tongues, are hands, are accidents;
And then this "should" is like a spendthrift sigh,
That hurts by easing. But, to the quick o' the ulcer.
Hamlet comes back: what would you undertake,
To show yourself your father's son in deed,
More than in words?
*Laer.* To cut his throat i' the church.
*King.* No place, indeed, should murder sanctuarize;
Revenge should have no bounds. But, good Laertes,
Will you do this, keep close within your chamber.
Hamlet return'd shall know you are come home.
We'll put on those shall praise your excellence,
And set a double varnish on the fame
The Frenchman gave you, bring you in fine together
And wager on your heads. He, being remiss,[8]
Most generous and free from all contriving,
Will not peruse[9] the foils; so that, with ease,
Or with a little shuffling, you may choose
A sword unbated,[10] and in a pass of practice[11]
Requite him for your father.
*Laer.* I will do't;
And, for that purpose, I'll anoint my sword.
I bought an unction[12] of a mountebank,[13]
So mortal that, but dip a knife in it,
Where it draws blood no cataplasm[14] so rare,
Collected from all simples[15] that have virtue
Under the moon, can save the thing from death

---

[1] **topp'd:** surpassed.
[2] **forgery:** invention.
[3] **scrimers:** fencers (French *escrimeurs*).
[4] **is . . . time:** inborn.
[5] **passages . . . proof:** experience has proved.
[6] **still:** constantly.
[7] **plurisy:** plethora, excess.
[8] **remiss:** careless.
[9] **peruse:** scrutinize.
[10] **unbated:** unblunted (without the button at the end).
[11] **pass . . . practice:** a treacherous thrust.
[12] **unction:** ointment.
[13] **mountebank:** quack.
[14] **cataplasm:** poultice.
[15] **simples:** herbs.

That is but scratch’d withal.[1] I’ll touch my point
With this contagion,[2] that, if I gall him slightly,
It may be death.
*King.* Let’s further think of this;
Weigh what convenience both of time and means
May fit us to our shape.[3] If this should fail,
And that[4] our drift look through[5] our bad performance,
’Twere better not assay’d. Therefore this project
Should have a back or second, that might hold,
If this should blast in proof.[6] Soft! Let me see.
We’ll make a solemn wager on your cunnings,
I ha’t.
When in your motion you are hot and dry—
As make your bouts[7] more violent to that end—
And that he calls for drink, I’ll have prepar’d him
A chalice for the nonce,[8] whereon but sipping,
If he by chance escape your venom’d stuck,[9]
Our purpose may hold there.

*Enter* Queen

How now, sweet queen!
*Queen.* One woe doth tread upon another’s heel,
So fast they follow. Your sister’s drown’d, Laertes.
*Laer.* Drown’d! O, where?
*Queen.* There is a willow grows aslant a brook,
That shows his hoar leaves in the glassy stream.
There with fantastic garlands did she come
Of crow-flowers,[10] nettles, daisies, and long purples[11]
That liberal[12] shepherds give a grosser name,
But our cold maids do dead men’s fingers call them.
There, on the pendent boughs her coronet weeds
Clambering to hang, an envious sliver[13] broke;
When down her weedy trophies, and herself
Fell in the weeping brook. Her clothes spread wide,
And, mermaid-like, awhile they bore her up:
Which time she chanted snatches of old tunes,
As one incapable[14] of her own distress
Or like a creature native and indued
Unto[15] that element. But long it could not be
Till that her garments, heavy with their drink,
Pull’d the poor wretch from her melodious lay
To muddy death.
*Laer.* Alas, then, she is drown’d?
*Queen.* Drown’d, drown’d.
*Laer.* Too much of water hast thou, poor Ophelia,
And therefore I forbid my tears. But yet
It is our trick[16]; nature her custom holds,
Let shame say what it will. When these are gone,
The woman will be out.[17] Adieu, my lord.
I have a speech of fire, that fain would blaze,
But that this folly douts[18] it. [*Exit*

*King.* Let’s follow, Gertrude:
How much I had to do to calm his rage!
Now fear I this will give it start again;
Therefore let’s follow. [*Exeunt*

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[1] **withal:** with it.
[2] **contagion:** poison.
[3] **shape:** plan
[4] **that:** i.e., if.
[5] **look through:** should be exposed.
[6] **blast . . . proof:** burst in the test (like a cannon).
[7] **bouts:** rounds.
[8] **nonce:** for the occasion.
[9] **stuck:** thrust.
[10] **crow-flowers:** variously explained as crowfoot, ragged robins, and buttercups.
[11] **long purples:** purple orchid.
[12] **liberal:** free-spoken.
[13] **sliver:** branch.
[14] **incapable of:** insensible to.
[15] **indued unto:** suited to.
[16] **trick:** habit.
[17] **the . . . out:** cf. Henry V, Act IV, Sc. 6, l. 31–33.
“But I had not so much of man in me,
And all the mother came into mine eyes
And gave me up to tears.”
[18] **douts:** extinguishes (does out).

## ACT V

### Scene I

### *A Churchyard*

*Enter two* Clowns, *with spades, etc.*

*1st Clown.* Is she to be buried in Christian burial that wilfully seeks her own salvation[1]?

*2nd Clown.* I tell thee she is; and therefore make her grave straight[2]. The crowner hath sat on her, and finds it Christian burial.

*1st Clown.* How can that be, unless she drowned herself in her own defence?

*2nd Clown.* Why, 'tis found so.

*1st Clown.* It must be *se offendendo;*[3] it cannot be else. For here lies the point: if I drown myself wittingly, it argues an act, and an act hath three branches; it is, to act, to do, and to perform. Argal,[4] she drowned herself wittingly.

*2nd Clown.* Nay, but hear you, goodman delver,—

*1st Clown.* Give me leave. Here lies the water; good. Here stands the man; good. If the man go to this water, and drown himself, it is, will he, nill he,[5] he goes,—mark you that; but if the water come to him and drown him, he drowns not himself. Argal, he that is not guilty of his own death shortens not his own life.

*2nd Clown.* But is this law?

*1st Clown.* Ay, marry, is't; crowner's quest[6] law.

*2nd Clown.* Will you ha' the truth on't? If this had not been a gentlewoman, she should have been buried out o' Christian burial.

*1st Clown.* Why, there thou say'st; and the more pity that great folk should have countenance in this world to drown or hang themselves, more than their even-Christian.[7] Come, my spade. There is no ancient gentlemen but gardeners, ditchers, and grave-makers; they hold up[8] Adam's profession.[9]

*2nd Clown.* Was he a gentleman?

*1st Clown.* He was the first that ever bore arms.

*2nd Clown.* Why, he had none.

*1st Clown.* What, art a heathen? How dost thou understand the Scripture? The Scripture says "Adam digged;" could he dig without arms? I'll put another question to thee. If thou answerest me not to the purpose, confess thyself—[10]

*2nd Clown.* Go to.[11]

*1st Clown.* What is he that builds stronger than either the mason, the shipwright, or the carpenter?

*2nd Clown.* The gallows-maker; for that frame outlives a thousand tenants.

*1st Clown.* I like thy wit well, in good faith; the gallows does well. But how does it well? It does well to those that do ill. Now thou dost ill to say the gallows is built stronger than the church. Argal, the gallows may do well to thee. To't again, come.

*2nd Clown.* "Who builds stronger than a mason, a shipwright, or a carpenter?"

*1st Clown.* Ay, tell me that, and unyoke.[12]

*2nd Clown.* Marry, now I can tell.

*1st Clown.* To't.

*2nd Clown.* Mass, I cannot tell.

*Enter* Hamlet *and* Horatio, *at a Distance*

*1st Clown.* Cudgel thy brains no more about it; for your dull ass will not mend his pace with beating; and, when you are asked this question next, say "a grave-maker:" the houses that he makes last till doomsday. Go, get thee to Yaughan[13]; fetch me a stoup[14] of liquor.

[*Exit* Second Clown

---

[1] **salvation:** his blunder for "destruction."

[2] **straight:** straightway.

[3] **se offendendo:** his blunder for *se defendendo;* i.e., in self-defence.

[4] **argal:** his blunder for *ergo;* i.e., therefore.

[5] **will . . . he:** willy-nilly.

[6] **crowner's quest:** coroner's inquest.

[7] **even-Christian:** fellow-Christian.

[8] **hold up:** maintain.

[9] **Adam's profession:** The old couplet ran:
"When Adam delve and Eve span,
Who was then the gentleman?"

[10] **thyself—:** —and be hanged! (a proverbial expression).

[11] **Go to:** Come!

[12] **unyoke:** quit (as at the end of a day's work).

[13] **Yaughan:** an alehouse keeper.

[14] **stoup:** drinking-cup.

[*He digs, and sings.*]

*In youth when I did love, did love,*
*Methought it was very sweet,*
*To contract,*—O!—*the time, for*—ah![1]—*my behove,*
*O, methought, there was nothing meet.*

*Ham.* Has this fellow no feeling of his business, that he sings at grave-making?

*Hor.* Custom hath made it in him a property of easiness.[2]

*Ham.* 'Tis e'en so. The hand of little employment hath the daintier sense.

*1st Clown* [*sings*].

*But age, with his stealing steps,*
*Hath caught me in his clutch,*
*And hath shipp'd me intil*[3] *the land,*
*As if I had never been such.*

*Throws up a skull.*

*Ham.* That skull had a tongue in it, and could sing once. How the knave jowls[4] it to the ground, as if it were Cain's jaw-bone, that did the first murder! It might be the pate of a politician, which this ass now o'er-reaches; one that would circumvent God, might it not?

*Hor.* It might, my lord.

*Ham.* Or of a courtier, which could say "Good morrow, sweet lord! How dost thou, good lord?" This might be my lord such-a-one, that praised my lord such-a-one's horse, when he meant to beg it; might it not?

*Hor.* Ay, my lord.

*Ham.* Why, e'en so; and now my Lady Worm's; chapless, and knocked about the mazzard[5] with a sexton's spade. Here's fine revolution, an we had the trick to see't. Did these bones cost no more the breeding, but to play at loggats[6] with 'em? Mine ache to think on't.

*1st Clown* [*sings*].

*A pick-axe, and a spade, a spade,*
*For and a shrouding sheet;*
*O, a pit of clay for to be made*
*For such a guest is meet.*

*Throws up another skull.*

*Ham.* There's another. Why may not that be the skull of a lawyer? Where be his quiddits[7] now, his quillets,[8] his cases, his tenures, and his tricks? Why does he suffer this rude knave now to knock him about the sconce[9] with a dirty shovel, and will not tell him of his action of battery? Hum! This fellow might be in's time a great buyer of land, with his statutes,[10] his recognizances,[10] his fines, his double vouchers, his recoveries. Is this the fine of[11] his fines, and the recovery of his recoveries, to have his fine pate full of fine dirt? Will his vouchers vouch him no more of his purchases, and double ones too, than the length and breadth of a pair of indentures?[12] The very conveyances of his lands will hardly lie in this box; and must the inheritor[13] himself have no more, ha?

*Hor.* Not a jot more, my lord.

*Ham.* Is not parchment made of sheep-skins?

*Hor.* Ay, my lord, and of calf-skins too.

*Ham.* They are sheep and calves that seek out assurance[14] in that. I will speak to this fellow.—Whose grave's this, sirrah?

*1st Clown.* Mine, sir.

[*Sings.*] *O, a pit of clay for to be made*
*For such a guest is meet.*

*Ham.* I think it be thine, indeed, for thou liest in't.

*1st Clown.* You lie out on't, sir, and therefore it is not yours. For my part, I do not lie in't, and yet it is mine.

*Ham.* Thou dost lie in't, to be in't and say it is thine. 'Tis for the dead, not for the quick;[15] therefore thou liest.

*1st Clown.* 'Tis a quick lie, sir; 'twill away again, from me to you.

*Ham.* What man dost thou dig it for?

*1st Clown.* For no man, sir.

*Ham.* What woman, then?

---

[1] **ah:** *O* and *ah* represent the gravedigger's grunts over his labor.

[2] **property . . . easiness:** a thing of custom.

[3] **intil:** into.

[4] **jowls:** knocks.

[5] **mazzard:** head.

[6] **loggats:** "little logs;" name of a game in which small pieces of wood are thrown at a mark, much as in quoits.

[7] **quiddits:** subtleties.

[8] **quillets:** quibbles.

[9] **sconce:** pate.

[10] **statutes, recognizances:** terms used in English title deeds.

[11] **fine of:** end of.

[12] **indentures:** duplicate agreements.

[13] **inheritor:** owner.

[14] **assurance:** safety.

[15] **quick:** living.

*1st Clown.* For none, neither.

*Ham.* Who is to be buried in't?

*1st Clown.* One that was a woman, sir; but, rest her soul, she's dead.

*Ham.* How absolute[1] the knave is! We must speak by the card,[2] or equivocation will undo us. By the Lord, Horatio, these three years I have taken a note of it: the age is grown so picked[3] that the toe of the peasant comes so near the heel of the courtier, he galls his kibe.[4]—How long hast thou been a grave-maker?

*1st Clown.* Of all the days i' the year, I came to't that day that our last king Hamlet overcame Fortinbras.

*Ham.* How long is that since?

*1st Clown.* Cannot you tell that? Every fool can tell that. It was the very day that young Hamlet was born; he that is mad and sent unto England.

*Ham.* Ay, marry, why was he sent into England?

*1st Clown.* Why, because he was mad. He shall recover his wits there; or, if he do not, it's no great matter there.

*Ham.* Why?

*1st Clown.* 'Twill not be seen in him there; there the men are as mad as he.

*Ham.* How came he mad?

*1st Clown.* Very strangely, they say.

*Ham.* How, strangely?

*1st Clown.* Faith, e'en with losing his wits.

*Ham.* Upon what ground?

*1st Clown.* Why, here in Denmark. I have been sexton here, man and boy, thirty years.

*Ham.* How long will a man lie i' the earth ere he rot?

*1st Clown.* I' faith, if he be not rotten before he die—as we have many pocky corses now-a-days that will scarce hold the laying in—he will last you some eight year or nine year. A tanner will last you nine year.

*Ham.* Why he more than another?

*1st Clown.* Why, sir, his hide is so tanned with his trade, that he will keep out water a great while; and your water is a sore decayer of your whoreson dead body. Here's a skull now; this skull has lain in the earth three and twenty years.

*Ham.* Whose was it?

*1st Clown.* A whoreson mad fellow's it was; whose do you think it was?

*Ham.* Nay, I know not.

*1st Clown.* A pestilence on him for a mad rogue! A' poured a flagon of Rhenish on my head once. This same skull, sir, was Yorick's skull, the king's jester.

*Ham.* This?

*1st Clown.* E'en that.

*Ham.* Let me see. [*Takes the skull.*] Alas, poor Yorick! I knew him, Horatio; a fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy. He hath borne me on his back a thousand times; and now, how abhorred in my imagination it is! My gorge rises at it. Here hung those lips that I have kissed I know not how oft.—Where be your gibes now? Your gambols? Your songs? Your flashes of merriment, that were wont to set the table on a roar? Not one now, to mock your own grinning? Quite chop-fallen? Now get you to my lady's chamber, and tell her, let her paint an inch thick, to this favour[5] she must come; make her laugh at that. —Prithee, Horatio, tell me one thing.

*Hor.* What's that, my lord?

*Ham.* Dost thou think Alexander looked o' this fashion i' the earth?

*Hor.* E'en so.

*Ham.* And smelt so? Pah!

*Puts down the skull.*

*Hor.* E'en so, my lord.

*Ham.* To what base uses we may return, Horatio! Why may not imagination trace the noble dust of Alexander, till we find it stopping a bunghole?

*Hor.* 'Twere to consider too curiously, to consider so.

*Ham.* No, faith, not a jot; but to follow him thither with modesty enough, and likelihood to lead it; as thus: Alexander died, Alexander was buried, Alexander returneth into dust; the dust is earth; of earth we make loam; and why of that loam, whereto he was converted, might they not stop a beer-barrel?

---

[1] absolute: exact.

[2] by . . . card: with precision (*card* probably the mariners' chart).

[3] picked: finical.

[4] kibe: chilblain.

[5] favour: appearance.

Imperious Cæsar, dead and turn'd to clay,
Might stop a hole to keep the wind away.
O, that that earth, which kept the world in awe,
Should patch a wall to expel the winter's flaw![1]
But soft! But soft! Aside! Here comes the king.

*Enter* PRIESTS, *etc., in procession; the Corpse of* OPHELIA, LAERTES *and* Mourners *following;* KING, QUEEN, *their trains, etc.*

The Queen, the courtiers. Who is this they follow,
And with such maimed[2] rites? This doth betoken
The corse they follow did with desperate hand
Fordo it[3] own life. 'Twas of some estate.
Couch we awhile, and mark.
[*Retiring with* HORATIO

*Laer.* What ceremony else?

*Ham.* That is Laertes, a very noble youth: mark.

*Laer.* What ceremony else?

*1st Priest.* Her obsequies have been as far enlarg'd
As we have warrantise.[4] Her death was doubtful;
And, but that great command o'ersways the order,[5]
She should in ground unsanctifi'd have lodg'd
Till the last trumpet; for[6] charitable prayers,
Shards,[7] flints and pebbles should be thrown on her.
Yet here she is allow'd her virgin crants,[8]
Her maiden strewments and the bringing home
Of bell and burial.

*Laer.* Must there no more be done?

*1st Priest.* No more be done.
We should profane the service of the dead
To sing a requiem and such rest to her
As to peace-parted souls.[9]

*Laer.* Lay her i' the earth,
And from her fair and unpolluted flesh
May violets spring! I tell thee, churlish priest,
A ministering angel shall my sister be,
When thou liest howling.

*Ham.* What, the fair Ophelia!

*Queen.* Sweets to the sweet. Farewell!
[*Scattering flowers.*]
I hop'd thou shouldst have been my Hamlet's wife;
I thought thy bride-bed to have deck'd, sweet maid,
And not have strew'd thy grave.

*Laer.* O, treble woes
Fall ten times treble on that cursed head,
Whose wicked deed thy most ingenious sense[10]
Depriv'd thee of! Hold off the earth awhile,
Till I have caught her once more in mine arms.
[*Leaps into the grave.*]
Now pile your dust upon the quick and dead,
Till of this flat a mountain you have made,
To o'ertop old Pelion,[11] or the skyish head
Of blue Olympus.

*Ham.* [*advancing*]. What is he whose grief
Bears such an emphasis, whose phrase of sorrow
Conjures the wandering stars, and makes them stand
Like wonder-wounded hearers? This is I,
Hamlet the Dane.
*Leaps into the grave.*

*Laer.* The devil take thy soul!
*Grappling with him.*

*Ham.* Thou pray'st not well.
I prithee, take thy fingers from my throat,
For, though I am not splenitive[12] and rash,

---

[1] **flaw:** gust.
[2] **maimed:** imperfect.
[3] **Fordo it:** destroy its.
[4] **warrantise:** authority.
[5] **order:** prescribed order of the church.
[6] **for:** instead of.
[7] **shards:** pieces of broken pottery.
[8] **crants:** garlands.
[9] **peace-parted souls:** peace-departed souls.
[10] **ingenious sense:** keen mind.
[11] **Pelion:** The Titans piled Mount Pelion upon Mount Ossa in an attempt to scale the sky.
[12] **splenitive:** ill-tempered, passionate.

Yet have I something in me dangerous,
Which let thy wiseness fear. Hold off thy hand!
*King.* Pluck them asunder.
*Queen.* Hamlet, Hamlet!
*All.* Gentlemen,—
*Hor.* Good my lord, be quiet.

*The Attendants part them, and they come out of the grave.*

*Ham.* Why, I will fight with him upon this theme
Until my eyelids will no longer wag.
*Queen.* O my son, what theme?
*Ham.* I lov'd Ophelia; forty thousand brothers
Could not, with all their quantity of love
Make up my sum. What wilt thou do for her?
*King.* O, he is mad, Laertes.
*Queen.* For love of God, forbear him.
*Ham.* 'Swounds, show me what thou'lt do.
Woo't[1] weep? Woo't fight? Woo't fast? Woo't tear thyself?
Woo't drink up eisel,[2] eat a crocodile?
I'll do't. Dost thou come here to whine?
To outface me with leaping in her grave?
Be buried quick with her, and so will I,
And, if thou prate of mountains, let them throw
Millions of acres on us, till our ground,
Singeing his pate against the burning zone,
Make Ossa like a wart! Nay, an thou'lt mouth,[3]
I'll rant as well as thou.
*Queen.* This is mere madness;
And thus awhile the fit will work on him.
Anon, as patient as the female dove,
When that her golden couplets are disclos'd,[4]
His silence will sit drooping.
*Ham.* Hear you, sir.
What is the reason that you use me thus?
I lov'd you ever. But it is no matter;
Let Hercules himself do what he may,
The cat will mew and dog will have his day.[5] [*Exit*

*King.* I pray you, good Horatio, wait upon him. [*Exit* Horatio

[*To* Laertes.] Strengthen your patience in our last night's speech.
We'll put the matter to the present push.[6]
Good Gertrude, set some watch over your son.
This grave shall have a living[7] monument.
An hour of quiet shortly shall we see;
Till then, in patience our proceeding be.
[*Exeunt*

### Scene II

### *A Hall in the Castle*

*Enter* Hamlet *and* Horatio

*Ham.* So much for this, sir. Now let me see the other.
You do remember all the circumstance?
*Hor.* Remember it, my lord!
*Ham.* Sir, in my heart there was a kind of fighting,
That would not let me sleep. Methought I lay
Worse than the mutines[8] in the bilboes.[9] Rashly,—
And prais'd be rashness for it, let us know,
Our indiscretion sometimes serves us well,
When our deep plots do pall;[10] and that should teach us
There's a divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough-hew them how we will.
*Hor.* That is most certain.
*Ham.* Up from my cabin,
My sea-gown scarf'd about me, in the dark
Grop'd I to find out them; had my desire,
Finger'd their packet, and in fine withdrew
To mine own room again, making so bold,
My fears forgetting manners, to unseal
Their grand commission; where I found, Horatio,—
O royal knavery—an exact command,

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[1] **Woo't:** Would'st thou?
[2] **eisel:** vinegar.
[3] **mouth:** boast.
[4] **disclos'd:** hatched.
[5] **cat . . . day:** a proverbial expression.

[6] **present push:** immediate trial.
[7] **living:** lasting.
[8] **mutines:** mutineers.
[9] **bilboes:** stocks; fetters of iron.
[10] **pall:** spoil.

Larded[1] with many several sorts of reasons
Importing Denmark's health, and England's too,
With, ho! such bugs[2] and goblins in my life,
That, on the supervise,[3] no leisure bated,
No, not to stay the grinding of the axe,
My head should be struck off.
*Hor.* Is't possible?
*Ham.* Here's the commission. Read it at more leisure.
But wilt thou hear me how I did proceed?
*Hor.* I beseech you.
*Ham.* Being thus be-netted round with villainies—
Ere I could make a prologue to my brains,
They had begun the play—I sat me down,
Devis'd a new commission, wrote it fair.
I once did hold it, as our statists[4] do,
A baseness to write fair, and labour'd much
How to forget that learning: but, sir, now
It did me yeoman's service.[5] Wilt thou know
The effect of what I wrote?
*Hor.* Ay, good my lord.
*Ham.* An earnest conjuration from the king,
As England was his faithful tributary,
As love between them like the palm might flourish,
As peace should still her wheaten garland wear,
And stand a comma[6] 'tween their amities,
And many such-like Ases of great charge
That, on the view and knowing of these contents,
Without debatement further, more or less,
He should the bearers put to sudden death,
Not shriving-time allow'd.
*Hor.* How was this seal'd?
*Ham.* Why, even in that was heaven ordinant.[7]
I had my father's signet in my purse,
Which was the model of that Danish seal;
Folded the writ up in form of the other,
Subscrib'd it, gave't the impression, plac'd it safely,
The changeling never known. Now, the next day
Was our sea-fight; and what to this was sequent
Thou know'st already.
*Hor.* So Guildenstern and Rosencrantz go to't.
*Ham.* Why, man, they did make love to this employment.
They are not near my conscience; their defeat
Does by their own insinuation[8] grow.
'Tis dangerous when the baser nature comes
Between the pass[9] and fell incensed points
Of mighty opposites.[10]
*Hor.* Why, what a king is this!
*Ham.* Does it not, think'st thee, stand me now upon[11]—
He that hath kill'd my king and whor'd my mother,
Popp'd in between the election and my hopes,
Thrown out his angle for my proper[12] life,
And with such cozenage—is't not perfect conscience,
To quit[13] him with this arm? And is't not to be damn'd,
To let this canker of our nature come
In further evil?
*Hor.* It must be shortly known to him from England
What is the issue of the business there.
*Ham.* It will be short. The interim is mine,
And a man's life's no more than to say "One."
But I am very sorry, good Horatio,
That to Laertes I forgot myself;

---

[1] **larded:** garnished.

[2] **bugs:** bugbears, terrors.

[3] **supervise:** "looking-over."

[4] **statists:** statesmen.

[5] **yeoman's service:** The ancient English yeomen were famous for their military valour.

[6] **comma:** a "link."

[7] **ordinant:** controlling.

[8] **insinuation:** meddling.

[9] **pass:** thrust.

[10] **opposites:** opponents.

[11] **stand . . . upon:** be my bounden duty.

[12] **proper:** own.

[13] **quit:** requite.

For, by the image of my cause, I see
The portraiture of his. I'll court his favours.
But, sure, the bravery[1] of his grief did put me
Into a towering passion.

*Hor.* Peace! Who comes here?

*Enter* Osric

*Osric.* Your lordship is right welcome back to Denmark.

*Ham.* I humbly thank you, sir. [*Aside to* Horatio.] Dost know this water-fly?

*Hor.* [*aside to* Hamlet]. No, my good lord.

*Ham.* [*aside to* Horatio]. Thy state is the more gracious; for 'tis a vice to know him. He hath much land, and fertile. Let a beast be lord of beasts, and his crib shall stand at the king's mess. 'Tis a chough[2]; but, as I say, spacious in the possession of dirt.

*Osr.* Sweet lord, if your lordship were at leisure, I should impart a thing to you from his majesty.

*Ham.* I will receive it, sir, with all diligence of spirit. Put your bonnet to his right use; 'tis for the head.

*Osr.* I thank your lordship; it is very hot.

*Ham.* No, believe me, 'tis very cold; the wind is northerly.

*Osr.* It is indifferent cold, my lord, indeed.

*Ham.* But yet methinks it is very sultry and hot for my complexion.

*Osr.* Exceedingly, my lord; it is very sultry,—as 'twere, I cannot tell how. But, my lord, his majesty bade me signify to you that he has laid a great wager on your head. Sir, this is the matter,—

*Ham.* I beseech you, remember,—

Hamlet *moves him to put on his hat.*

*Osr.* Nay, good my lord; for mine ease, in good faith. Sir, here is newly come to court Laertes; believe me, an absolute gentleman, full of most excellent differences,[3] of very soft society and great showing.[4] Indeed, to speak feelingly[5] of him, he is the card or calendar of gentry, for you shall find in him the continent[6] of what part a gentleman would see.

*Ham.* Sir, his definement[7] suffers no perdition in you; though, I know, to divide him inventorially would dizzy the arithmetic of memory, and yet but yaw[8] neither, in respect of his quick sail. But, in the verity of extolment, I take him to be a soul of great article;[9] and his infusion[10] of such dearth[11] and rareness, as, to make true diction of him, his semblable[12] is his mirror; and who else would trace him, his umbrage,[13] nothing more.

*Osr.* Your lordship speaks most infallibly of him.

*Ham.* The concernancy,[14] sir? why do we wrap the gentleman in our more rawer breath?

*Osr.* Sir?

*Hor.* Is't not possible to understand in another tongue? You will do't, sir, really.[15]

*Ham.* What imports the nomination[16] of this gentleman?

*Osr.* Of Laertes?

*Hor.* [*aside to* Hamlet]. His purse is empty already; all's golden words are spent.

*Ham.* Of him, sir.

*Osr.* I know you are not ignorant—

*Ham.* I would you did, sir; yet, in faith, if you did, it would not much approve me.[17] Well, sir?

*Osr.* You are not ignorant of what excellence Laertes is—

*Ham.* I dare not confess that, lest I should compare with him in excellence; but, to know a man well, were to know himself.

*Osr.* I mean, sir, for his weapon; but in the imputation[18] laid on him by them, in his meed[19] he's unfellowed.

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[1] **bravery:** ostentatious display.
[2] **chough:** jackdaw.
[3] **excellent differences:** different excellences.
[4] **great showing:** fine appearing.
[5] **feelingly:** without reserve.
[6] **continent:** containment; sum and substance.
[7] **definement:** definition.
[8] **yaw:** vacillate.
[9] **article:** importance.
[10] **infusion:** qualities.
[11] **dearth:** value.
[12] **semblable:** likeness.
[13] **umbrage:** shadow.
[14] **concernancy:** relevancy; i.e., What is it all about?
[15] **You . . . really:** "You may catch on yet if you try!"
[16] **nomination:** mention.
[17] **much approve me:** do me much credit.
[18] **imputation:** reputation.
[19] **meed:** merit.

*Ham.* What's his weapon?

*Osr.* Rapier and dagger.

*Ham.* That's two of his weapons; but, well.

*Osr.* The king, sir, hath wagered with him six Barbary horses, against the which he has imponed,[1] as I take it, six French rapiers and poniards, with their assigns,[2] as girdle, hangers, and so. Three of the carriages, in faith, are very dear to fancy, very responsive to the hilts, most delicate carriages, and of very liberal conceit.[3]

*Ham.* What call you the carriages?

*Hor.* I knew you must be edified by the margent ere you had done.[4]

*Osr.* The carriages, sir, are the hangers.[5]

*Ham.* The phrase would be more germane[6] to the matter, if we could carry cannon by our sides; I would it might be hangers till then. But, on. Six Barbary horses against six French swords, their assigns, and three liberal-conceited carriages; that's the French bet against the Danish. Why is this "imponed," as you call it?

*Osr.* The king, sir, hath laid, that in a dozen passes between yourself and him, he shall not exceed you three hits. He hath laid on twelve for nine, and it would come to immediate trial, if your lordship would vouchsafe the answer.

*Ham.* How if I answer No?

*Osr.* I mean, my lord, the opposition of your person in trial.

*Ham.* Sir, I will walk here in the hall. If it please his majesty, 'tis the breathing time of day with me. Let the foils be brought, the gentleman willing, and the king hold his purpose, I will win for him if I can; if not, I will gain nothing but my shame and the odd hits.

*Osr.* Shall I re-deliver you e'en so?

*Ham.* To this effect, sir; after what flourish your nature will.

*Osr.* I commend my duty to your lordship.

*Ham.* Yours, yours. [*Exit* Osric.] He does well to commend it himself; there are no tongues else for's turn.

*Hor.* This lapwing runs away with the shell on his head.[7]

*Ham.* He did comply with[8] his dug, before he sucked it. Thus has he—and many more of the same bevy that I know the drossy age dotes on—only got the tune of the time and outward habit of encounter; a kind of yesty collection,[9] which carries them through and through the most fond and winnowed[10] opinions; and do[11] but blow them to their trial, the bubbles are out.

*Enter a* LORD

*Lord.* My lord, his majesty commended him to you by young Osric, who brings back to him, that you attend him in the hall. He sends to know if your pleasure hold to play with Laertes, or that you will take longer time.

*Ham.* I am constant to my purposes; they follow the king's pleasure. If his fitness speaks, mine is ready; now or whensoever, provided I be so able as now.

*Lord.* The king and queen and all are coming down.

*Ham.* In happy time.[12]

*Lord.* The queen desires you to use some gentle entertainment[13] to Laertes before you fall to play.

*Ham.* She well instructs me.

[*Exit* Lord

*Hor.* You will lose this wager, my lord.

*Ham.* I do not think so. Since he went into France, I have been in continual practice. I shall win at the odds.[14] But thou wouldst not think how ill all's here about my heart, but it is no matter.

*Hor.* Nay, good my lord,—

*Ham.* It is but foolery; but it is such a kind of gain-giving[15] as would perhaps trouble a woman.

---

[1] **imponed:** staked.

[2] **assigns:** belongings.

[3] **conceit:** artistic designs.

[4] **you . . . done:** You'd have to consult a dictionary before you got through! (Literally, be instructed by the marginal explanations.)

[5] **hangers:** straps attaching the sword to the belt.

[6] **germane:** appropriate.

[7] **shell . . . head:** the symbol of the impudent fellow.

[8] **comply with:** compliment.

[9] **yesty collection:** frothy (superficial) knowledge.

[10] **fond . . . winnowed:** foolish and subtle.

[11] **do:** if you do.

[12] **in . . . time:** just at the right time.

[13] **gentle entertainment:** courteous behavior.

[14] **at . . . odds:** with the odds I am allowed.

[15] **gain-giving:** misgiving.

*Hor.* If your mind dislike any thing, obey it. I will forestall their repair hither, and say you are not fit.

*Ham.* Not a whit, we defy augury. There's a special providence in the fall of a sparrow. If it be now, 'tis not to come; if it be not to come, it will be now; if it be not now, yet it will come. The readiness is all. Since no man has aught of what he leaves,[1] what is't to leave betimes?

*Enter* King, Queen, Laertes, Lords, Osric, *and* Attendants *with foils, etc.*

*King.* Come, Hamlet, come, and take this hand from me.

*The* King *puts* Laertes' *hand into* Hamlet's.

*Ham.* Give me your pardon, sir. I've done you wrong.
But pardon't, as you are a gentleman.
This presence[2] knows,
And you must needs have heard, how I am punish'd
With sore distraction. What I have done,
That might your nature, honour and exception[3]
Roughly awake, I here proclaim was madness.
Was't Hamlet wrong'd Laertes? Never Hamlet.
If Hamlet from himself be ta'en away,
And when he's not himself, does wrong Laertes,
Then Hamlet does it not, Hamlet denies it.
Who does it, then? His madness. If't be so,
Hamlet is of the faction that is wrong'd;
His madness is poor Hamlet's enemy.
Sir, in this audience,
Let my disclaiming from[4] a purpos'd evil
Free me so far in your most generous thoughts,
That I have shot mine arrow o'er the house,
And hurt my brother.

*Laertes.* I am satisfi'd in nature,
Whose motive, in this case, should stir me most
To my revenge. But in my terms of honour
I stand aloof, and will no reconcilement,
Till by some elder masters, of known honour,[5]
I have a voice[6] and precedent of peace,
To keep my name ungor'd.[7] But till that time,
I do receive your offer'd love like love,
And will not wrong it.

*Ham.* I embrace it freely,
And will this brother's wager frankly play,
Give us the foils. Come on.

*Laer.* Come, one for me.

*Ham.* I'll be your foil,[8] Laertes; in mine ignorance
Your skill shall, like a star i' the darkest night,
Stick fiery off[9] indeed.

*Laer.* You mock me, sir.

*Ham.* No, by this hand.

*King.* Give them the foils, young Osric.—Cousin Hamlet,
You know the wager?

*Ham.* Very well, my lord,
Your grace hath laid the odds o' the weaker side.

*King.* I do not fear it; I have seen you both.
But since he is better'd,[10] we have therefore odds.

*Laer.* This is too heavy; let me see another.

*Ham.* This likes me well. These foils have all a length?

*They prepare to play.*

*Osr.* Ay, my good lord.

*King.* Set me the stoups of wine upon that table.
If Hamlet give the first or second hit,
Or quit in answer of the third exchange,
Let all the battlements their ordnance fire.
The king shall drink to Hamlet's better breath;
And in the cup an union[11] shall he throw,
Richer than that which four successive kings
In Denmark's crown have worn. Give me the cups;

---

[1] **has . . . leaves:** perhaps: "knows aught of what the future is to bring him."

[2] **presence:** this court.

[3] **exception:** objection.

[4] **disclaiming from:** disavowing.

[5] **elder . . . honor:** authorities on the code of honor.

[6] **voice:** opinion.

[7] **ungor'd:** unhurt.

[8] **foil:** setting (as of a precious stone for contrast).

[9] **Stick fiery off:** be brilliantly set off.

[10] **is better'd:** his skill is improved.

[11] **union:** a single pearl. [Latin, *unus*, one.] It is, of course, the poison that he really drops into the cup.

And let the kettle[1] to the trumpet speak,
The trumpet to the cannoneer without,
The cannons to the heavens, the heavens to earth,
"Now the king drinks to Hamlet." Come, begin;
And you, the judges, bear a wary eye.
*Ham.* Come on, sir.
*Laer.* Come, my lord.
*They play.*
*Ham.* One.
*Laer.* No.
*Ham.* Judgment.
*Osr.* A hit, a very palpable hit.
*Laer.* Well; again.
*King.* Stay; give me drink. Hamlet, this pearl is thine.
Here's to thy health.
[*Trumpets sound, and cannon shot off within.*
Give him the cup.
*Ham.* I'll play this bout first. Set it by awhile.
Come. [*They play.*] Another hit; what say you?
*Laer.* A touch, a touch, I do confess.
*King.* Our son shall win.
*Queen.* He's fat,[2] and scant of breath.
Here, Hamlet, take my napkin,[3] rub thy brows.
The queen carouses[4] to thy fortune, Hamlet.
*Ham.* Good madam!
*King.* Gertrude, do not drink.
*Queen.* I will, my lord; I pray you, pardon me.
*King* [*aside*]. It is the poison'd cup. It is too late.
*Ham.* I dare not drink yet, madam; by and by.
*Queen.* Come, let me wipe thy face.
*Laer.* My lord, I'll hit him now.
*King.* I do not think't.
*Laer.* [*aside*]. And yet 'tis almost 'gainst my conscience.
*Ham.* Come, for the third, Laertes. You but dally.
I pray you, pass with your best violence.
I am afeard you make a wanton[5] of me.
*Laer.* Say you so? Come on.
*They play.*
*Osr.* Nothing, neither way.
*Laer.* Have at you now!
Laertes *wounds* Hamlet; *then, in scuffling, they change rapiers, and* Hamlet *wounds* Laertes.
*King.* Part them; they are incens'd.
*Ham.* Nay, come, again.
[*The* Queen *falls*
*Osr.* Look to the queen there, ho!
*Hor.* They bleed on both sides.—How is it, my lord?
*Osr.* How is't, Laertes?
*Laer.* Why, as a woodcock to mine own springe,[6] Osric.
I am justly kill'd with mine own treachery.
*Ham.* How does the queen?
*King.* She swounds to see them bleed.
*Queen.* No, no, the drink, the drink,—O my dear Hamlet,—
The drink, the drink! I am poison'd.
[*Dies*
*Ham.* O villainy!—Ho!—let the door be lock'd!
Treachery! Seek it out!
*Laer.* It is here, Hamlet. Hamlet, thou art slain.
No medicine in the world can do thee good.
In thee there is not half an hour of life.
The treacherous instrument is in thy hand,
Unbated[7] and envenom'd. The foul practice[8]
Hath turn'd itself on me. Lo, here I lie,
Never to rise again. Thy mother's poison'd.
I can no more: the king, the king's to blame.
*Ham.* The point!—envenom'd too!
Then, venom, to thy work.
*Stabs the* King.
*All.* Treason! treason!
*King.* O, yet defend me, friends; I am but hurt.

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[1] kettle: kettle-drum.

[2] fat: soft, out of practice (?). There is a tradition that Richard Burbage, who created the part of Hamlet, was fat.

[3] napkin: handkerchief.

[4] carouses: drinks.

[5] wanton: fool.

[6] springe: snare.

[7] unbated: unblunted.

[8] practice: plot.

*Ham.* Here, thou incestuous, murderous, damned Dane,
Drink off this potion. Is thy union here?
Follow my mother. [King *dies*
*Laer.* He is justly served;
It is a poison temper'd[1] by himself.
Exchange forgiveness with me, noble Hamlet.
Mine and my father's death come not upon thee,
Nor thine on me! [*Dies*
*Ham.* Heaven make thee free of it! I follow thee.—
I am dead, Horatio.—Wretched queen, adieu!
You that look pale and tremble at this chance,
That are but mutes or audience to this act.
Had I but time—as this fell[2] sergeant, death,
Is strict in his arrest—O, I could tell you—
But let it be.—Horatio, I am dead;
Thou livest. Report me and my cause aright.
To the unsatisfied.
*Hor.* Never believe it.
I am more an antique Roman than a Dane.
Here's yet some liquor left.
*Ham.* As thou'rt a man,
Give me the cup! Let go! By heaven, I'll have't.—
O good Horatio, what a wounded name,
Things standing thus unknown, shall live behind me!
If thou didst ever hold me in thy heart,
Absent thee from felicity awhile,
And in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain,
To tell my story.—[*March afar off, and shot within.*]
What warlike noise is this?
*Osr.* Young Fortinbras, with conquest come from Poland,
To the ambassadors of England gives
This warlike volley.
*Ham.* O, I die, Horatio.
The potent poison quite o'ercrows[3] my spirit.
I cannot live to hear the news from England;
But I do prophesy the election lights
On Fortinbras. He has my dying voice.[4]
So tell him, with the occurrents,[5] more and less,
Which have solicited.[6]—The rest is silence. [*Dies*
*Hor.* Now cracks a noble heart. Good night, sweet prince,
And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest!—
Why does the drum come hither?
*March within.*

*Enter* Fortinbras, *the* English Ambassadors, *and others*

*For.* Where is this sight?
*Hor.* What is it ye would see?
If aught of woe or wonder, cease your search.
*For.* This quarry cries on havoc.[7]—O proud death,
What feast is toward in thine eternal cell,
That thou so many princes at a shot
So bloodily hast struck?
*1st Ambassador.* The sight is dismal,
And our affairs from England come too late.
The ears are senseless that should give us hearing,
To tell him his commandment is fulfill'd.
That Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are dead.
Where should we have our thanks?
*Hor.* Not from his mouth.[8]
Had it the ability of life to thank you.
He never gave commandment for their death.
But since, so jump upon[9] this bloody question,
You from the Polack wars, and you from England,
Are here arriv'd, give order that these bodies
High on a stage be placed to the view;
And let me speak to the yet unknowing world
How these things came about. So shall you hear

---

[1] temper'd: mixed.
[2] fell: cruel.
[3] o'ercrows: overpowers.
[4] voice: choice; suffrage.
[5] occurrents: occurrences.
[6] solicited: induced (me to do what I did).
[7] This . . . havoc: These dead proclaim a general slaughter.
[8] his mouth: i.e., the King's.
[9] jump upon: opportunely upon.

Of carnal, bloody, and unnatural acts,
Of accidental judgments, casual slaughters,
Of deaths put on by cunning and forc'd cause.
And, in this upshot,[1] purposes mistook
Fall'n on the inventors' heads. All this can I
Truly deliver.
*For.* Let us haste to hear it,
And call the noblest to the audience.
For me, with sorrow I embrace my fortune.
I have some rights of memory[2] in this kingdom.
Which now to claim, my vantage doth invite me.
*Hor.* Of that I shall have also cause to speak,
And from his mouth whose voice will draw on[3] more.
But let this same be presently[4] perform'd,
Even while men's minds are wild; lest more mischance,
On[5] plots and errors, happen.
*For.* Let four captains
Bear Hamlet, like a soldier, to the stage;
For he was likely, had he been put on,[6]
To have proved most royally: and, for his passage,[7]
The soldiers' music and the rites of war
Speak loudly for him.—
Take up the bodies.—Such a sight as this
Becomes the field, but here shows much amiss.—
Go, bid the soldiers shoot.

[*A dead march. Exeunt, bearing off the dead bodies, after which a peal of ordnance is shot off.*

## READING LIST

*Ralph Royster Doyster*, Nicholas Udall
*Gorboduc; or Ferrex and Porrex*, Thomas Sackville
*The Spanish Tragedy*, Thomas Kyd
*Edward II*, Christopher Marlowe
*Tamburlaine*, Christopher Marlowe
*Endymion*, John Lyly
*Friar Bacon, and Friar Bungay*, Robert Greene
*The Old Wives' Tale*, George Peele
*A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Shakespeare
*The Taming of the Shrew*, Shakespeare
*As You Like It*, Shakespeare
*The Merchant of Venice*, Shakespeare
*Twelfth Night*, Shakespeare
*Much Ado About Nothing*, Shakespeare
*King John*, Shakespeare
*Henry IV, Parts I and II*, Shakespeare
*Henry V*, Shakespeare
*Richard III*, Shakespeare
*Romeo and Juliet*, Shakespeare
*Julius Cæsar*, Shakespeare
*Othello*, Shakespeare
*Macbeth*, Shakespeare
*King Lear*, Shakespeare
*Antony and Cleopatra*, Shakespeare
*Coriolanus*, Shakespeare
*The Tempest*, Shakespeare
*Cymbeline*, Shakespeare
*The Winter's Tale*, Shakespeare
*Henry VIII*, Shakespeare and Fletcher
Shakespeare's *Sonnets*
*Marlowe* (A Play), Josephine Preston Peabody
*Fortune and Men's Eyes*, Josephine Preston Peabody
*The Dark Lady of the Sonnets*, George Bernard Shaw
*If Shakespeare Were Alive To-day*, Lord Dunsany
*Will Shakespeare*, Clemence Dane

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[1] **upshot**: final event.
[2] **rights . . . memory**: rights to be remembered now.
[3] **draw on**: be endorsed by.
[4] **presently**: immediately.
[5] **on**: in consequence of.
[6] **put on**: put to the test.
[7] **passage**: death.

## TOPICS

The University Wits
The Rival Companies of Actors in Shakespeare's Time
The Theatres in Elizabethan England
A Performance of a Play in Shakespeare's Time
The Effect of the Lack of Scenery on the Construction of an Elizabethan Play
Christopher Marlowe
A Comparison of *Edward II* with Shakespeare's *Richard II*
The Influence of Seneca on Elizabethan Drama
Kyd's *Spanish Tragedy* and Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus* as Tragedies of Blood
Shakespeare's Life
The Problem of Shakespeare's Sonnets
Shakespeare's Art
  The Four Periods of His Works
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  The Types of His Plays
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Shakespeare as a Practical Playwright
Does Shakespeare believe in "Poetic Justice"?
Dramatic Contrast in His Plays
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The Early *Hamlets*
A Comparison of Sophocles and of Shakespeare in Their Ideas of the Tragic
Shakespeare and His Contemporaries
Contemporary Tributes to Shakespeare
The Mermaid Tavern
Elizabethan Audiences
Theatre Customs of the Time (See INDUCTION to *Cynthia's Revels* by Ben Jonson, 1600)

## BEN JONSON

No one has ever excelled Shakespeare's greatest plays. This is especially true of his tragedies. His comedies are peculiarly Elizabethan in that they are romantic and idealistic rather than realistic. It remained for his friend, the famous literary law-giver of the early seventeenth century, "rare" **Ben Jonson** (1573–1637) to establish in England the *comedy-of-manners*. He portrayed the men and women of contemporary London, his object being "to show an image of the times." But having propounded his doctrine of "humours," i.e., that every person has some one peculiar quality which molds and dominates all other traits in his character, Jonson was apt to over-emphasize his character portrayal into types or even caricatures. His plays become satiric in their purpose of moral reform, and are overburdened with his vast learning. He could not create an admirable woman. He was a stern classicist and believed that Shakespeare, who ignored all classic rules, "wanted art." Yet Jonson's comedies are admirably constructed around original plots; and are good examples of serious comedy. It was his comedies rather than Shakespeare's that were imitated by the later dramatists under the Stuarts. His greatest comedies are: *Every Man in His Humour; Volpone or the Fox; Epicœne, or the Silent Woman; The Alchemist.* Others less famous are: the satirical comedies, *Cynthia's Revels* and *The Poetaster;* and the studies of low life in London, *Bartholomew Fair, The Devil is an Ass,* and *The Staple of News.*

Jonson wrote also two heavy classical tragedies: *Sejanus* and *Catiline*, carefully constructed according to Senecan models. But he was especially famous in his own time for the *masques* which he composed. Though other dramatists, such as, Fletcher, Chapman, Dekker, Daniel, Davenant, also wrote masques, Jonson was the acknowledged master of these picturesque entertainments. The masque had been an incidental part of the pageants of Queen Elizabeth's progresses; but in the reign of her successor, James I, and of the other Stuarts, it became the favorite court amusement. A masque is not pure drama: it is a spectacular play based on an allegorical or pastoral story, which employs the aid of dancing, music, song, decoration, and unique scenic effects. Much of the beauty depended upon the skill of the designer of the setting and machinery, and upon the art of the musical composer. Ben Jonson collaborated with **Inigo Jones** to produce these elaborate and marvelous spectacles, in which the ladies of the court and even the queen herself took part.

Although the masque is not strictly drama, yet its influence cannot be ignored; for it was the chief court entertainment during more than half of the seventeenth century, and disappeared only when the opera became the fashionable entertainment of eighteenth century London. The masque satisfied the love of beauty as did the choruses of Greek drama. This same zest for spectacular effects is gratified in much of the theatrical entertainment of to-day; modern art theatres are doing all in the power of imaginative craftsmanship to recreate the pictorial and musical appeal of the drama; and community drama, especially the pageant, depends upon the spectacle far more than upon the spoken word for its effects.

Many dramatists were writing at the same time as Shakespeare. Some outlived him, and carried on the Elizabethan tradition of drama for half a century longer. These successors of Shakespeare wrote a great variety of plays: tragedies, comedies, tragi-comedies, even burlesques and melodramas. *Philaster*, by the famous collaborators **Francis Beaumont** and **John Fletcher**, is typical of the romantic comedy; *The Shoemaker's Holiday* by **Thomas Dekker**, of the realistic comedy; *A Woman Killed with Kindness* by **Thomas Heywood**, of the sentimental domestic drama. The tragedies became somber and terrible, often melodramatic in their intensified passions and succession of horrors. The interest centers in the plot rather than in their truth to human nature. *The Duchess of Malfi* by **John Webster** is one of the most powerful. There were many other playwrights of this period, the most famous of whom are: **George Chapman**, **Philip Massinger**, **Thomas Middleton**, **John Ford**, **James Shirley**. The latter was still producing popular plays when the theatres were closed by the Puritans in 1642.

Drama had deteriorated during the seventeenth century. The high seriousness of Shakespeare's moral ideals was lost. The interest centered upon incident rather than upon truthful delineation of character. The comedies became coarse. The growing Puritanism frowned upon the theatres, and the dramatists in turn ridiculed the Puritans. At length plays were prohibited on Sundays; the theatres were closed entirely during the outbreak of the plague in 1637; and finally, when the civil war broke out in August, 1642, the Puritan parliament passed an edict on September 2 of the same year, closing all theatres and prohibiting the presentation of stage plays as not befitting the sternness of the troubled times. Actors were punished as rogues and vagabonds; many of them probably enlisted in the war; and until the Restoration of Charles II to the throne, there was no public drama in England. When the theatres reopened in the latter part of the seventeenth century, French influence had altered the national drama.

# EPICŒNE; OR THE SILENT WOMAN[1]

BEN JONSON

*This Comedy was first acted*
*in the year*
*1609*
*By the Children of her Majesty's Revels*

TO THE TRULY NOBLE BY ALL TITLES
SIR FRANCIS STUART[2]

SIR,—*My hope is not so nourished by example, as it will conclude, this dumb piece should please you, because it hath pleased others before; but by trust, that when you have read it, you will find it worthy to have displeased none. This makes that I now number you, not only in the names of favour, but the names of justice to what I write; and do presently call you to the exercise of that noblest, and manliest virtue; as coveting rather to be freed in my fame, by the authority of a judge, than the credit of an undertaker. Read, therefore, I pray you, and censure. There is not a line, or syllable in it, changed from the simplicity of the first copy. And, when you shall consider, through the certain hatred of some, how much a man's innocency may be endangered by an uncertain accusation; you will, I doubt not, so begin to hate the iniquity of such natures, as I shall love the contumely done me, whose end was so honourable as to be wiped off by your sentence. Your unprofitable, but true Lover,* BEN JONSON.

### DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

MOROSE, *a gentleman that loves no noise*
SIR DAUPHINE EUGENIE, *a knight, his nephew*
NED CLERIMONT, *a gentleman, his friend.*
TRUEWIT, *another friend*
SIR JOHN DAW, *a knight*
SIR AMOROUS LA-FOOLE, *a knight also*
THOMAS OTTER, *a land and sea captain*
CUTBEARD, *a barber*
MUTE, *one of* MOROSE'S *servants*
PARSON

PAGE *to* CLERIMONT
EPICŒNE, *supposed the* Silent Woman
LADY HAUGHTY,
LADY CENTAURE,
MISTRESS DOL MAVIS,
*Ladies Collegiates*
MISTRESS OTTER, *the captain's wife,*
MISTRESS TRUSTY, *Lady Haughty's woman,*
*Pretenders*
Pages, Servants, *etc.*

SCENE—LONDON

### PROLOGUE

Truth says, of old the art of making plays
Was to content the people; and their praise
Was to the poet money, wine, and bays.[3]

But in this age, a sect of writers are,
That, only, for particular likings care,
And will taste nothing that is popular.

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[1] [**Editor's Note:** This play has been cut.]

[2] "He was a learned gentleman, was one of Sir Walter Raleigh's club at the Mermaid-tavern in Friday-street, London."—ANTHONY WOOD.

[3] bays: laurel; i.e., the symbol of poetic reward. Jonson himself was the recipient of pensions from James I and Charles I.

With such we mingle neither brains nor breasts;
Our wishes, like to those make public feasts,
Are not to please the cook's taste but the guests.'

Yet, if those cunning palates hither come,
They shall find guests' entreaty, and good room;
And though all relish not, sure there will be some,

That, when they leave their seats, shall make them say,
Who wrote that piece, could so have wrote a play,
But that he knew this was the better way.

For, to present all custard, or all tart,
And have no other meats to bear a part,
Or to want bread, and salt, were but coarse art.

The poet prays you then, with better thought
To sit; and, when his cates are all in brought,
Though there be none far-fet,[1] there will dear-bought,

Be fit for ladies: some for lords, knights, 'squires;
Some for your waiting-wench, and city-wires;[2]
Some for your men, and daughters of Whitefriars.[3]

Nor is it, only, while you keep your seat
Here, that his feast will last; but you shall eat
A week at ord'naries, on his broken meat:
If his muse be true,
Who commends her to you.

### ANOTHER

The ends of all, who for the scene do write,
Are, or should be, to profit and delight.
And still't hath been the praise of all best times,
So persons were not touch'd, to tax the crimes.
Then, in this play, which we present to-night,
And make the object of your ear and sight,
On forfeit of yourselves, think nothing true:
Lest so you make the maker to judge you.
For he knows, poet never credit gain'd
By writing truths, but things, like truths, well feign'd.
If any yet will, with particular sleight
Of application, wrest what he doth write;
And that he meant, or him, or her, will say:
They make a libel, which he made a play.

## ACT I

### Scene I

*A Room in Clerimont's House*

*Enter* Clerimont, *making himself ready followed by his* Page

*Clerimont.* Have you got the song yet perfect, I gave you, boy?

*Page.* Yes, sir.

*Cler.* Let me hear it.

*Page.* You shall, sir; but i'faith let nobody else.

*Cler.* Why, I pray?

*Page.* It will get you the dangerous name of a poet in town, sir; besides me a perfect deal of ill-will at the mansion you wot of, whose lady is the argument of it; where now I am the welcomest thing under a man that comes there.

*Cler.* I think; and above a man too, if the truth were rack'd out of you.

*Page.* No, faith, I'll confess before, sir. The gentlewomen play with me, and carry me in to my lady: and she kisses me with her oil'd face, and puts a peruke on my head; and asks me an I will wear her gown? and I say no: and then she hits me a blow o' the ear, and calls me Innocent! and lets me go.

---

[1] **far-fet:** far-fetched.

[2] **city-wires:** women of fashion; probably from the fact that their lace collars were wired to stand out.

[3] **daughters . . . Whitefriars:** women from the slums.

*Cler.* No marvel if the door be kept shut against your master, when the entrance is so easy to you——well, sir, you shall go there no more, lest I be fain to seek your voice in my lady's rushes,[1] a fortnight hence. Sing, sir.

*Page* [*sings*].

Still to be neat, still to be drest—

*Enter* TRUEWIT

*Truewit.* Why, here's the man that can melt away his time and never feels it! What between his mistress abroad and his ingle at home, high fare, soft lodging, fine clothes, and his fiddle; he thinks the hours have no wings, or the day no post-horse. Well, sir gallant, were you struck with the plague this minute, or condemn'd to any capital punishment to-morrow, you would begin then to think, and value every article of your time, esteem it at the true rate, and give all for it.

*Cler.* Why what should a man do?

*True.* Why, nothing; or that which, when 'tis done, is as idle. Hearken after the next horse-race, or hunting-match, lay wagers, praise Puppy, or Peppercorn, White-foot, Franklin; swear upon Whitemane's[2] party; speak aloud, that my lords may hear you; visit my ladies, and be able to give them the character of every bowler or better on the green. These be the things wherein your fashionable men exercise themselves, and I for company.

*Cler.* Nay, if I have thy authority, I'll not leave yet. Come, the other are considerations, when we come to have gray heads and weak hams, moist eyes and shrunk members. We'll think on 'em then; and we'll pray and fast.

*True.* Ay, and destine only that time of age to goodness, which our want of ability will not let us employ in evil!

*Cler.* Why, then 'tis time enough.

*True.* Yes; as if a man should sleep all the term, and think to effect his business the last day. O, Clerimont, this time, because it is an incorporeal thing, and not subject to sense, we mock ourselves the fineliest out of it, with vanity and misery indeed! not seeking an end of wretchedness, but only changing the matter still.

*Cler.* Nay, thou'lt not leave now—

*True.* See but our common disease! with what justice can we complain, that great men will not look upon us, nor be at leisure to give our affairs such dispatch as we expect, when we will never do it to ourselves? nor hear, nor regard ourselves?

*Cler.* Foh! thou hast read Plutarch's morals, now, or some such tedious fellow; and it shews so vilely with thee! 'fore God, 'twill spoil thy wit utterly. Talk to me of pins, and feathers, and ladies, and rushes, and such things: and leave this Stoicity[3] alone, till thou mak'st sermons.

*True.* Well, sir; if it will not take, I have learn'd to lose as little of my kindness as I can; I'll do good to no man against his will, certainly. When were you at the college?

*Cler.* What college?

*True.* As if you knew not!

*Cler.* No, faith, I came but from court yesterday.

*True.* Why, is it not arrived there yet, the news? A new foundation, sir, here in the town, of ladies, that call themselves the collegiates, an order between courtiers and country-madams; that give entertainment to all the wits, and braveries of the time, as they call them: cry down, or up, what they like or dislike in a brain or a fashion, with most masculine authority; and every day gain to their college some new probationer.

*Cler.* Who is the president?

*True.* The grave and youthful matron, the lady Haughty.

*Cler.* A pox of her autumnal face, her pieced beauty! there's no man can be admitted till she be ready, now-a-days, till she has painted, and perfumed, and wash'd, and scour'd, but the boy, here; and him she wipes her oil'd lips upon, like a sponge. I have made a song (I pray thee hear it) on the subject.

---

[1] rushes: floors were strewn with rushes.

[2] Puppy . . . Whitemane: race-horses of the time.

[3] Stoicity: philosophizing.

*Page* [*sings*].

Still to be neat, still to be drest,
As you were going to a feast;
Still to be powder'd, still perfum'd;
Lady, it is to be presumed,
Though art's hid causes are not found,
All is not sweet, all is not sound.

Give me a look, give me a face,
That makes simplicity a grace;
Robes loosely flowing, hair as free:
Such sweet neglect more taketh me,
Than all the adulteries of art;
They strike mine eyes, but not my heart.

*True.* And I am clearly on the other side: I love a good dressing before any beauty o' the world. O, a woman is then like a delicate garden; nor is there one kind of it; she may vary every hour; take often counsel of her glass, and choose the best. If she have good ears, shew them; good hair, lay it out; good legs, wear short clothes; a good hand, discover it often: practise any art to mend breath, cleanse teeth, repair eye-brows; paint, and profess it.

*Cler.* How! publicly?

*True.* The doing of it, not the manner: that must be private. Many things that seem foul in the doing, do please done. A lady should, indeed, study her face, when we think she sleeps; nor, when the doors are shut, should men be enquiring; all is sacred within, then. Is it for us to see their perukes put on, their false teeth, their complexion, their eye-brows, their nails? You see gilders will not work, but inclosed. They must not discover how little serves, with the help of art, to adorn a great deal. How long did the canvas hang afore Aldgate?[1] Were the people suffered to see the city's Love and Charity,[2] while they were rude stone, before they were painted and burnish'd? No; no more should servants approach their mistresses, but when they are complete and finish'd.

*Cler.* Well said, my Truewit.

*True.* And a wise lady will keep a guard always upon the place, that she may do things securely. I once followed a rude fellow into a chamber, where the poor madam, for haste, and troubled, snatch'd at her peruke to cover her baldness; and put it on the wrong way.

*Cler.* O prodigy!

*True.* And the unconscionable knave held her in compliment an hour with that reverst face, when I still look'd when she should talk from the t'other side.

*Cler.* Why, thou shouldst have relieved her.

*True.* No, faith, I let her alone, as we'll let this argument, if you please, and pass to another. When saw you Dauphine Eugenie?

*Cler.* Not these three days. Shall we go to him this morning? he is very melancholy, I hear.

*True.* Sick of the uncle, is he? I met that stiff piece of formality, his uncle, yesterday, with a huge turban of night-caps on his head, buckled over his ears.

*Cler.* O, that's his custom when he walks abroad. He can endure no noise, man.

*True.* So I have heard. But is the disease so ridiculous in him as it is made? They say he has been upon divers treaties with the fish-wives and orange-women; and articles propounded between them: marry, the chimney-sweepers will not be drawn in.

*Cler.* No, nor the broom-men: they stand out stiffly. He cannot endure a costard-monger,[3] he swoons if he hear one.

*True.* Methinks a smith should be ominous.

*Cler.* Or any hammer-man. A brasier is not suffer'd to dwell in the parish, nor an armourer. He would have hang'd a pewterer's prentice once upon a Shrove-Tuesday's[4] riot, for being of that trade, when the rest were quit.

*True.* A trumpet should fright him terribly, or the hautboys.[5]

*Cler.* Out of his senses. The waights[6] of the city have a pension of him not to come near that ward. This youth practised on him one night like the bell-man;

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[1] **Aldgate:** "Aldgate began to be taken down in 1606, and was very worthily and famously finished in 1609."

[2] **Love, Charity:** two statues on either side of the gate.

[3] **costard-monger:** costermonger; huckster.

[4] **Shrove-Tuesday:** the holiday for apprentices.

[5] **hautboys:** oboes.

[6] **waights:** waits; carolers.

and never left till he had brought him down to the door with a long sword; and there left him flourishing with the air.

*Page.* Why, sir, he hath chosen a street to lie in so narrow at both ends, that it will receive no coaches, nor carts, nor any of these common noises: and therefore we that love him, devise to bring him in such as we may, now and then, for his excercise, to breathe him. He would grow resty[1] else in his ease: his virtue would rust without action. I entreated a bearward, one day, to come down with the dogs of some four parishes that way, and I thank him he did; and cried his games under master Morose's window: till he was sent crying away, with his head made a most bleeding spectacle to the multitude. And, another time, a fencer marching to his prize, had his drum most tragically run through, for taking that street in his way at my request.

*True.* A good wag! How does he for the bells?

*Cler.* O, in the Queen's time, he was wont to go out of town every Saturday at ten o'clock, or on holy day eves. But now, by reason of the sickness,[2] the perpetuity of ringing has made him devise a room, with double walls and treble ceilings; the windows close shut and caulk'd: and there he lives by candle-light. He turn'd away a man, last week, for having a pair of new shoes that creak'd. And this fellow waits on him now in tennis-court socks, or slippers soled with wool: and they talk each to other in a trunk.[3] See, who comes here!

*Enter* Sir Dauphine Eugenie

*Dauphine.* How now! what ails you, sirs? dumb?

*True.* Struck into stone, almost, I am here, with tales o' thine uncle. There was never such a prodigy heard of.

*Daup.* I would you would once lose this subject, my masters, for my sake. They are such as you are, that have brought me into that predicament I am with him.

*True.* How is that?

*Daup.* Marry, that he will disinherit me; no more. He thinks, I and my company are authors of all the ridiculous Acts and Monuments[4] are told of him.

*True.* 'Slid, I would be the author of more to vex him; that purpose deserves it: it gives thee law of plaguing him. I'll tell thee what I would do. I would make a false almanack, get it printed; and then have him drawn out on a coronation day to the Tower-wharf, and kill him with the noise of the ordnance. Disinherit thee! he cannot, man. Art not thou next of blood, and his sister's son?

*Daup.* Ay, but he will thrust me out of it, he vows, and marry.

*True.* How! that's a more portent. Can he endure no noise, and will venture on a wife?

*Cler.* Yes: why thou art a stranger, it seems, to his best trick, yet. He has employed a fellow this half year all over England to hearken him out a dumb woman; be she of any form, or any quality, so she be able to bear children: her silence is dowry enough, he says.

*True.* But I trust to God he has found none.

*Cler.* No; but he has heard of one that's lodged in the next street to him, who is exceedingly soft-spoken; thrifty of her speech; that spends but six words a day. And her he's about now, and shall have her.

*True.* Is't possible! who is his agent in the business?

*Cler.* Marry, a barber, one Cutbeard; an honest fellow, one that tells Dauphine all here.

*True.* Why you oppress me with wonder: a woman, and a barber, and love no noise!

*Cler.* Yes, faith. The fellow trims him silently, and has not the knack with his shears or his fingers: and that continence in a barber he thinks so eminent a virtue, as it has made him chief of his counsel.

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[1] **resty**: dull.

[2] **the sickness**: the plague. The bells tolled for the dead.

[3] **trunk**: ear-trumpet.

[4] **Acts and Monuments**: *The Acts and Monuments of these latter and Perilous days*, etc., by John Fox (1563), commonly known as the *Book of Martyrs*.

*True.* Is the barber to be seen, or the wench?

*Cler.* Yes, that they are.

*True.* I prithee, Dauphine, let's go thither.

*Daup.* I have some business now: I cannot, i'faith.

*True.* You shall have no business shall make you neglect this, sir: we'll make her talk, believe it; or, if she will not, we can give out at least so much as shall interrupt the treaty; we will break it. Thou art bound in conscience, when he suspects thee without cause, to torment him.

*Daup.* Not I, by any means. I'll give no suffrage to't. He shall never have that plea against me, that I opposed the least phant'sy of his. Let it lie upon my stars to be guilty, I'll be innocent.

*True.* Yes, and be poor, and beg; do, innocent: when some groom of his has got him an heir, or this barber, if he himself cannot. *Innocent!*—I prithee, Ned, where lies she? let him be innocent still.

*Cler.* Why, right over against the barber's; in the house where sir John Daw lies.

*True.* You do not mean to confound me!

*Cler.* Why?

*True.* Does he that would marry her know so much?

*Cler.* I cannot tell.

*True.* 'Twere enough of imputation to her with him.

*Cler.* Why?

*True.* The only talking sir in the town! Jack Daw! and he teach her not to speak!—God be wi' you. I have some business too.

*Cler.* Will you not go thither, then?

*True.* Not with the danger to meet Daw, for mine ears.

*Cler.* Why, I thought you two had been upon very good terms.

*True.* Yes, of keeping distance.

*Cler.* They say, he is a very good scholar.

*True.* Ay, and he says it first. A pox on him, a fellow that pretends only to learning, buys titles, and nothing else of books in him!

*Cler.* The world reports him to be very learned.

*True.* I am sorry the world should so conspire to belie him.

*Cler.* Good faith, I have heard very good things come from him.

*True.* You may; there's none so desperately ignorant to deny that: would they were his own! God be wi' you, gentlemen. [*Exit hastily*

*Cler.* This is very abrupt!

*Daup.* Come, you are a strange open man, to tell every thing thus.

*Cler.* Why, believe it, Dauphine, Truewit's a very honest fellow.

*Daup.* I think no other: but this frank nature of his is not for secrets.

*Cler.* Nay, then, you are mistaken, Dauphine: I know where he has been well trusted, and discharged the trust very truly, and heartily.

*Daup.* I contend not, Ned; but with the fewer a business is carried, it is ever the safer. Now we are alone, if you'll go thither, I am for you.

*Cler.* When were you there?

*Daup.* Last night: and such a Decameron of sport fallen out! Boccace[1] never thought of the like. Daw does nothing but court her; and the wrong way. He praises her modesty; desires that she would talk and be free, and commends her silence in verses; which he reads, and swears are the best that ever man made. Then rails at his fortunes, stamps, and mutines, why he is not made a counsellor, and call'd to affairs of state.

*Cler.* I prithee let's go. I would fain partake this.—Some water, boy. [*Exit* PAGE

*Daup.* We are invited to dinner together, he and I, by one that came thither to him, sir La-Foole.

*Cler.* O, that's a precious mannikin!

*Daup.* Do you know him?

*Cler.* Ay, and he will know you too, if e'er he saw you but once, though you should meet him at church in the midst of prayers. He is one of the braveries,[2] though he be none of the wits. He will salute a judge upon the bench, and a bishop in the pulpit, a lawyer when he is pleading at the bar, and a lady when she is dancing in a masque, and put her out. He does give plays, and suppers, and invites his guests to them, aloud, out of his window, as they ride by in coaches. He has a lodging in the Strand for the purpose: or to watch when ladies are gone to the china-houses,[1] or the Exchange,[2] that he may meet them by chance, and give them presents, some two or three hundred pounds' worth of toys, to be laugh'd at.

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[1] Boccace: *The Decameron* by Boccaccio; a book of one hundred tales published in 1353.

[2] braveries: gallants, beaus.

*Daup.* Excellent! he was a fine youth last night; but now he is much finer! what is his Christian name? I have forgot.

*Re-enter* PAGE

*Cler.* Sir Amorous La-Foole.

*Page.* The gentleman is here below that owns that name.

*Cler.* 'Heart, he's come to invite me to dinner, I hold my life.

*Daup.* Like enough: prithee, let's have him up.

*Cler.* Boy, marshal him.

*Page.* With a truncheon,[3] sir?

*Cler.* Away, I beseech you. [*Exit* PAGE.]—I'll make him tell us his pedigree now; and what meat he has to dinner; and who are his guests; and the whole course of his fortunes; with a breath.

*Enter* SIR AMOROUS LA-FOOLE

*La-Foole.* 'Save, dear sir Dauphine! honoured master Clerimont!

*Cler.* Sir Amorous! you have very much honested my lodging with your presence.

*La-F.* Good faith, it is a fine lodging: almost as delicate a lodging as mine.

*Cler.* Not so, sir.

*La-F.* Excuse me, sir, if it were in the Strand, I assure you. I am come, master Clerimont, to entreat you to wait upon two or three ladies, to dinner, to-day.

*Cler.* How, sir! wait upon them? did you ever see me carry dishes?

*La-F.* No, sir, dispense with me; I meant, to bear them company.

*Cler.* O, that I will, sir: the doubtfulness of your phrase, believe it, sir, would breed you a quarrel once an hour, with the terrible boys,[4] if you should but keep them fellowship a day.

*La-F.* It should be extremely against my will, sir, if I contested with any man.

*Cler.* I believe it, sir: Where hold you your feast?

*La-F.* At Tom Otter's, sir.

*Daup.* Tom Otter! what's he?

*La-F.* Captain Otter, sir; he is a kind of gamester, but he has had command both by sea and by land.

*Daup.* O, then he is *animal amphibium?*[5]

*La-F.* Ay, sir: his wife was the rich china-woman, that the courtiers visited so often; that gave the rare entertainment. She commands all at home.

*Cler.* Then she is captain Otter.

*La-F.* You say very well, sir; she is my kinswoman, a La-Foole by the mother-side, and will invite any great ladies for my sake.

*Daup.* Not of the La-Fooles of Essex?

*La-F.* No, sir, the La-Fooles of London.

*Cler.* [*aside*]. Now, he's in.

*La-F.* They all come out of our house, the La-Fooles of the north, the La-Fooles of the west, the La-Fooles of the east and south—we are as ancient a family as any is in Europe—but I myself am descended lineally of the French La-Fooles—and, we do bear for our coat yellow, or *or*, checker'd *azure*, and *gules*, and some three or four colours more, which is a very noted coat,[6] and has, sometimes, been solemnly worn by divers nobility of our house—but let that go, antiquity is not respected now. —I had a brace of fat does sent me, gentlemen, and half a dozen of pheasants, a dozen or two of godwits,[7] and some other fowl, which I would have eaten, while they are good, and in good company:—there will be a great lady or two, my lady Haughty, my lady Centaure, mistress Dol Mavis—and they come o' purpose to see the silent gentlewoman, mistress Epicœne, that honest sir John Daw has promised to bring thither—and then, mistress Trusty, my lady's woman, will be there too, and this honourable knight, sir Dauphine, with yourself, master Clerimont—and we'll be very merry, and have fidlers, and dance.—I have been a mad wag in my time, and have spent some crowns since I was a page in court, to my lord Lofty, and after, my lady's gentleman-usher, who got me knighted in Ireland, since it pleased my elder brother to die.—I had as fair a gold jerkin on that day, as any worn in the island voyage,[1] or at Cadiz,[2] none dispraised; and I came over in it hither, shew'd myself to my friends in court, and after went down to my tenants in the country, and surveyed my lands, let new leases, took their money, spent it in the eye o' the land[3] here, upon ladies:— and now I can take up at my pleasure.

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[1] **china-houses:** to buy pieces of imported china,—the latest fad of the time.

[2] **Exchange:** fashionable shopping district.

[3] **truncheon:** staff of office.

[4] **terrible boys:** roistering young fellows.

[5] **animal amphibium:** amphibious animal.

[6] **yellow . . . coat:** gold, blue, and red:—a jester's costume.

[7] **godwits:** snipe.

*Daup.* Can you take up ladies, sir?

*Cler.* O, let him breathe, he has not recover'd.

*Daup.* Would I were your half in that commodity!

*La-F.* No, sir, excuse me: I meant money, which can take up any thing. I have another guest or two, to invite, and say as much to, gentlemen. I'll take my leave abruptly, in hope you will not fail——Your servant. [*Exit*

*Daup.* We will not fail you, sir precious La-Foole; but she shall, that your ladies come to see, if I have credit afore sir Daw.

*Cler.* Did you ever hear such a windsucker, as this?

*Daup.* Or such a rook as the other, that will betray his mistress to be seen! Come, 'tis time we prevented it.

*Cler.* Go. [*Exeunt*

## ACT II

### Scene I

*A Room in Morose's House*

*Enter* Morose, *with a tube in his hand, followed by* Mute

*Morose.* Cannot I, yet, find out a more compendious method, than by this trunk, to save my servants the labour of speech, and mine ears the discords of sounds? Let me see: all discourses but my own afflict me; they seem harsh, impertinent, and irksome. Is it not possible, that thou shouldst answer me by signs, and I apprehend thee, fellow? Speak not, though I question you. You have taken the ring off from the street door, as I bade you? answer me not by speech, but by silence; unless it be otherwise [Mute *makes a leg.*[4]]—very good. And you have fastened on a thick quilt, or flock-bed,[5] on the outside of the door; that if they knock with their daggers, or with brick-bats, they can make no noise?—But with your leg, your answer, unless it be otherwise. [*Makes a leg.*]—Very good. This is not only fit modesty in a servant, but good state and discretion in a master. And you have been with Cutbeard the barber, to have him come to me? [*Makes a leg.*]—Good. And, he will come presently? Answer me not but with your leg, unless it be otherwise; if it be otherwise, shake your head, or shrug. [*Makes a leg.*]—So! Your Italian and Spaniard are wise in these: and it is a frugal and comely gravity. How long will it be ere Cutbeard come? Stay; if an hour, hold up your whole hand, if half an hour, two fingers; if a quarter, one; [*Holds up a finger bent.*]—Good: half a quarter? 'tis well. And have you given him a key, to come in without knocking? [*Makes a leg.*]—good. And is the lock oil'd, and the hinges, to-day? [*Makes a leg.*]—good. And the quilting of the stairs no where worn out and bare? [*Makes a leg.*]—Very good. I see, by much doctrine, and impulsion, it may be effected; stand by. The Turk, in this divine discipline, is admirable, exceeding all the potentates of the earth; still waited on by mutes; and all his commands so executed; yea, even in the war, as I have heard, and in his marches, most of his charges and directions given by signs, and with silence: an exquisite art! and I am heartily ashamed, and angry oftentimes, that the princes of Christendom should suffer a barbarian to transcend them in so high a point of felicity. I will practise it hereafter. [*A horn winded within.*]—How now? oh! oh! what villain, what prodigy of mankind is that? look. [*Exit* MUTE.]—[*Horn again.*]—Oh! cut his throat, cut his throat! what murderer, hell-hound, devil can this be?

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[1] **the island voyage:** the expedition of Drake in 1585, to the West Indies, especially Hispaniola (Haiti), in which he captured several Spanish cities.

[2] **Cadiz:** Lord Admiral Howard and the Earl of Essex sacked this wealthy seaport of Spain in 1596.

[3] **eye o' the land:** London.

[4] **leg:** a bow.

[5] **flock-bed:** a featherbed.

*Re-enter* MUTE

*Mute.* It is a post from the court—

*Mor.* Out, rogue! and must thou blow thy horn too?

*Mute.* Alas, it is a post from the court, sir, that says, he must speak with you, pain of death—

*Mor.* Pain of thy life, be silent!

*Enter* TRUEWIT *with a post-horn, and a halter in his hand*

*True.* By your leave, sir;—I am a stranger here:—Is your name master Morose? is your name master Morose? Fishes! Pythagoreans[1] all! This is strange. What say you, sir? nothing! Has Harpocrates[2] been here with his club, among you? Well, sir, I will believe you to be the man at this time: I will venture upon you, sir. Your friends at court commend them to you, sir—

*Mor.* O men! O manners! was there ever such an impudence?

*True.* And are extremely solicitous for you, sir.

*Mor.* Whose knave are you?

*True.* Mine own knave, and your compeer, sir.

*Mor.* Fetch me my sword—

*True.* You shall taste the one half of my dagger, if you do, groom; and you the other, if you stir, sir: Be patient, I charge you, in the king's name, and hear me without insurrection. They say, you are to marry; to marry! do you mark, sir?

*Mor.* How then, rude companion!

*True.* Marry, your friends do wonder, sir, the Thames being so near, wherein you may drown, so handsomely; or London-bridge, at a low fall, with a fine leap, to hurry you down the stream; or, such a delicate steeple in the town, as Bow, to vault from; or, a braver height, as Paul's: Or, if you affected to do it nearer home, and a shorter way, an excellent garret-window into the street; or, a beam in the said garret, with this halter [*Shews him the halter.*]—which they have sent, and desire, that you would sooner commit your grave head to this knot, than to the wedlock noose; or, take a little sublimate, and go out of the world like a rat: any way, rather than follow this goblin Matrimony. Alas, sir, do you ever think to find a chaste wife in these times? now? when there are so many masques, plays, Puritan preachings, mad folks, and other strange sights to be seen daily, private and public? If you had lived in king Etheldred's time, sir, or Edward the Confessor, you might, perhaps, have found one in some cold country hamlet, then, a dull frosty wench, would have been contented with one man: now, they will as soon be pleased with one leg, or one eye. I'll tell you, sir, the monstrous hazards you shall run with a wife.

*Mor.* Good sir, have I ever cozen'd any friends of yours of their land? bought their possessions? taken forfeit of their mortgage? begg'd a reversion from them? What have I done, that may deserve this?

*True.* Nothing, sir, that I know, but your itch of marriage.

*Mor.* Why, if I had made an assassinate upon your father,—

*True.* I would kill you, sir, I would kill you, if you had.

*Mor.* Why, you do more in this, sir: it were a vengeance centuple, for all facinorous[3] acts that could be named, to do that you do.

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[1] **Pythagoreans:** Followers of Pythagoras, a Greek philosopher whose teachings were held secret *mysteries.*

[2] **Harpocrates:** The Egyptian god Horus, represented with a finger on his lips. The Greeks and Romans made him the god of silence.

[3] **facinorous:** wicked.

*True.* Alas, sir, I am but a messenger: I but tell you, what you must hear. It seems your friends are careful after your soul's health, sir, and would have you know the danger: (but you may do your pleasure for all them, I persuade not, sir). If, after you are married, your wife do run away with a vaulter, or the Frenchman that walks upon ropes, or him that dances the jig, or a fencer for his skill at his weapon; why it is not their fault, they have discharged their consciences; when you know what may happen. Nay, suffer valiantly, sir, for I must tell you all the perils that you are obnoxious to. If she be fair, young and vegetous,[1] no sweetmeats ever drew more flies; all the yellow doublets and great roses in the town will be there.[2] If foul and crooked, she'll be with them, and buy those doublets and roses, sir. If rich, and that you marry her dowry, not her, she'll reign in your house as imperious as a widow. If noble, all her kindred will be your tyrants. If fruitful, as proud as May, and humorous as April; she must have her doctors, her midwives, her nurses, her longings every hour; though it be for the dearest morsel of man. If learned, there was never such a parrot; all your patrimony will be too little for the guests that must be invited to hear her speak Latin and Greek. If precise,[3] you must feast all the silenced brethren, once in three days; salute the sisters; entertain the whole family, or wood[4] of them; and hear long-winded exercises, singings and catechisings, which you are not given to, and yet must give for; to please the zealous matron your wife, who for the holy cause, will cozen you over and above. You begin to sweat, sir! but this is not half, i'faith: you may do your pleasure, notwithstanding, as I said before: I come not to persuade you. [Mute *is stealing away.*]—Upon my faith, master serving-man, if you do stir, I will beat you.

*Mor.* O, what is my sin! what is my sin!

*True.* Then, if you love your wife, or rather dote on her, sir; O, how she'll torture you, and take pleasure in your torments! she will not hurt her beauty, her complexion; every half hour's pleasure must be bought anew, and with the same pain and charge you woo'd her at first. Then you must keep what servants she please; what company she will; that friend must not visit you without her license; and him she loves most, she will seem to hate eagerliest, to decline your jealousy; or, feign to be jealous of you first; and for that cause go live with her she-friend, or cousin at the college, that can instruct her in all the mysteries of writing letters, corrupting servants, taming spies; where she must have that rich gown for such a great day; a new one for the next; a richer for the third; be served in silver; have the chamber fill'd with a succession of grooms, footmen, ushers, and other messengers; besides embroiderers, jewellers, tire-women, sempsters, feathermen, perfumers; whilst she feels not how the land drops away, nor the acres melt; nor foresees the change, when the mercer has your woods for her velvets; never weighs what her pride costs, sir; so she may kiss a page, or a smooth chin, that has the despair of a beard: be a stateswoman, know all the news, what was done at Salisbury,[5] what at the Bath,[5] what at court, what in progress,[6] or, so she may censure poets, and authors, and styles, and compare them; Daniel with Spenser, Jonson with the t'other youth, and so forth: or be thought cunning in controversies, or the very knots of divinity; and have often in her mouth the state of the question; and then skip to the mathematics, and demonstration: and answer in religion to one, in state to another.

*Mor.* O, O!

*True.* All this is very true, sir. And then her going in disguise to that conjurer, and this cunning woman: where the first question is, how soon you shall die? next, if her present servant love her? next, if she shall have a new servant? and how many? what precedence she shall have by her next match? and sets down the answers, and believes them above the scriptures. Nay, perhaps she'll study the art.

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[1] **vegetous**: vivacious.

[2] **all . . . there**: the fashionable gallants. (The roses were huge rosettes worn on the shoes.)

[3] **precise**: Puritanical.

[4] **wood**: crowd.

[5] **Salisbury, Bath**: fashionable resorts of the time.

[6] **progress**: the King's progresses (visits) to towns and castles. Cf. Scott's *Kenilworth.*

*Mor.* Gentle sir, have you done? have you had your pleasure of me? I'll think of these things.

*True.* Yes, sir: and then comes reeking home of vapour and sweat, with going a foot, and lies in a month of a new face, all oil and birdlime; and rises in asses' milk, and is cleansed with a new fucus:[1] God be wi' you, sir. 'Tis no devised, impossible thing, sir. God be wi' you: I'll be bold to leave this rope with you, sir, for a remembrance.—Farewell, Mute! [*Exit*

*Mor.* Come, have me to my chamber: but first shut the door. [TRUEWIT *winds the horn without.*] O, shut the door, shut the door! is he come again?

*Enter* CUTBEARD

*Cutbeard.* 'Tis I, sir, your barber.

*Mor.* O, Cutbeard, Cutbeard, Cutbeard! here has been a cut-throat with me: help me in to my bed, and give me physic with thy counsel. [*Exeunt*

## SCENE II

### *A Room in Sir John Daw's House*

*Enter* DAW, CLERIMONT, DAUPHINE, *and* EPICŒNE[2]

*Daw.* Nay, an she will, let her refuse at her own charges; 'tis nothing to me, gentlemen: but she will not be invited to the like feasts or guests every day.

*Cler.* O, by no means, she may not refuse—to stay at home, if you love your reputation: 'Slight, you are invited thither o' purpose to be seen, and laughed at by the lady of the college, and her shadows. [*Aside to* EPICŒNE.] This trumpeter hath proclaim'd you.

*Daup.* [*aside to* EPICŒNE]. You shall not go; let him be laugh'd at in your stead, for not bringing you: and put him to his extemporal faculty of fooling and talking loud, to satisfy the company.

*Cler.* He will suspect us; talk aloud. —'Pray, mistress Epicœne, let's see your verses; we have sir John Daw's leave; do not conceal your servant's merit, and your own glories.

*Epicœne.* They'll prove my servant's glories, if you have his leave so soon.

*Daup.* His vain-glories, lady!

*Daw.* Shew them, shew them, mistress; I dare own them.

*Epi.* Judge you, what glories.

*Daw.* Nay, I'll read them myself too: an author must recite his own works. It is a madrigal of Modesty.

Modest and fair, for fair and good are near
Neighbor's, howe'er.—

*Daup.* Very good.

*Cler.* Ay, is't not?

*Daw.* No noble virtue ever was alone,
But two in one.

*Daup.* Excellent!

*Cler.* That again, I pray, sir John.

*Daup.* It has something in't like rare wit and sense.

*Cler.* Peace.

*Daw.* No noble virtue ever was alone,
But two in one.
Then, when I praise sweet modesty, I praise
Bright beauty's rays:
And having praised both beauty and modesty,
I have praised thee.

*Daup.* Admirable!

*Cler.* How it chimes, and cries tink in the close, divinely!

*Daup.* Ay, 'tis Seneca.

*Cler.* No, I think 'tis Plutarch.

*Daw.* The dor on[3] Plutarch and Seneca! I hate it: they are mine own imaginations, by that light. I wonder those fellows have such credit with gentlemen.

*Cler.* They are very grave authors.

*Daw.* Grave asses! mere essayists: a few loose sentences, and that's all. A man would talk so, his whole age: I do utter as good things every hour, if they were collected and observed, as either of them.

*Daup.* Indeed, sir John!

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[1] fucus: dye, or bleach.

[2] Epicœne: The Silent Woman.

[3] dor on: Plague take!

*Cler.* He must needs; living among the wits and braveries too.

*Daup.* Ay, and being president of them, as he is.

*Daw.* There's Aristotle, a mere common-place fellow; Plato, a discourser; Thucydides and Livy, tedious and dry; Tacitus, an entire knot; sometimes worth the untying, very seldom.

*Cler.* What do you think of the poets, sir John?

*Daw.* Not worthy to be named for authors. Homer, an old tedious, prolix ass, talks of curriers, and chines of beef; Virgil of dunging of land, and bees; Horace, of I know not what.

*Cler.* I think so.

*Daw.* And so, Pindarus, Lycophron, Anacreon, Catullus, Seneca the tragedian, Lucan, Propertius, Tibullus, Martial, Juvenal, Ausonius, Statius, Politian, Valerius Flaccus,[1] and the rest—

*Cler.* What a sack full of their names he has got!

*Daup.* And how he pours them out! Politian with Valerius Flaccus!

*Cler.* Was not the character right of him?

*Daup.* As could be made, i'faith.

*Daw.* And Persius, a crabbed coxcomb, not to be endured.

*Daup.* Why, whom do you account for authors, sir John Daw?

*Daw.* Syntagma juris civilis; Corpus juris civilis; Corpus juris canonici;[2] the king of Spain's bible[3]—

*Daup.* Is the king of Spain's bible an author?

*Cler.* Yes, and Syntagma.

*Daup.* What was that Syntagma, sir?

*Daw.* A civil lawyer, a Spaniard.

*Daup.* Sure, Corpus was a Dutchman.

*Cler.* Ay, both the Corpuses, I knew 'em: they were very corpulent authors.

*Daw.* And then there's Vatablus, Pomponatius, Symancha:[4] the other are not to be received, within the thought of a scholar.

*Daup.* [*aside*]. 'Fore God, you have a simple learned servant, lady,—in titles.

*Cler.* I wonder that he is not called to the helm, and made a counsellor.

*Daup.* He is one extraordinary.

*Cler.* Nay, but in ordinary: to say truth, the state wants such.

*Daup.* Why that will follow.

*Cler.* I muse a mistress can be so silent to the dotes[5] of such a servant.

*Daw.* 'Tis her virtue, sir. I have written somewhat of her silence too.

*Daup.* In verse, sir John?

*Cler.* What else?

*Daup.* Why, how can you justify your own being of a poet, that so slight all the old poets?

*Daw.* Why, every man that writes in verse is not a poet; you have of the wits that write verses, and yet are no poets: they are poets that live by it, the poor fellows that live by it.

*Daup.* Why, would not you live by your verses, sir John?

*Cler.* No, 'twere pity he should. A knight live by his verses! he did not make them to that end, I hope.

*Daup.* And yet the noble Sidney lives by his, and the noble family not ashamed.

*Cler.* Ay, he profest himself; but sir John Daw has more caution: he'll not hinder his own rising in the state so much. Do you think he will? Your verses, good sir John, and no poems.

*Daw.* Silence in woman, is like speech in man;
Deny't who can.

*Daup.* Not I, believe it: your reason, sir.

*Daw.* Nor is't a tale,
That female vice should be a virtue male,
Or masculine vice a female virtue be:
You shall it see
Prov'd with increase;
I know to speak, and she to hold her peace.

Do you conceive me, gentlemen?

---

[1] **Pindarus, Anacreon:** Greek poets of the 5th century B.C. **Lycophron:** Greek poet of the 3rd century B.C. **Tibullus:** Roman poet of the 1st century B.C. **Ausonius:** Roman poet and teacher of the 4th century A.D. **Politian:** Italian scholar of the 15th century A.D. Gaius Valerius Flaccus and the others: all Latin poets of the 1st century A.D.

[2] **corpus . . . canonici:** The body of the civil law; the body of canon (church) law. Syntagma is a Greek word for a body or collection of writings.

[3] **king . . . bible:** Biblia Regia: a reprint in 1572 at the expense of Philip II of Spain of the first edition of the Christian Scriptures in the original texts, which had been compiled under the direction of Cardinal Jimines from 1502 to 1517.

[4] **Vatablus . . . Symancha:** These three men were scholars of the early Renaissance.

[5] **dotes:** qualities.

*Epi.* 'Pray give me my verses again, servant.

*Daw.* If you'll ask them aloud, you shall.

*Walks aside with the papers.*

*Enter* TRUEWIT *with his horn*

*Cler.* See, here's Truewit again!—Where hast thou been, in the name of madness, thus accoutred with thy horn?

*True.* Where the sound of it might have pierced your sense with gladness, had you been in ear-reach of it. Dauphine, fall down and worship me; I have forbid the bans, lad: I have been with thy virtuous uncle, and have broke the match.

*Daup.* You have not, I hope.

*True.* Yes, faith; and thou shouldst hope otherwise, I should repent me: this horn got me entrance; kiss it. I had no other way to get in, but by feigning to be a post; but when I got in once, I proved none, but rather the contrary, turn'd him into a post, or a stone, or what is stiffer, with thundering into him the incommodities of a wife, and the miseries of marriage. If ever Gorgon were seen in the shape of a woman, he hath seen her in my description: I have put him off o' that scent for ever.—Why do you not applaud and adore me, sirs? why stand you mute? are you stupid. You are not worthy of the benefit.

*Daup.* Did not I tell you? Mischief!—

*Cler.* I would you had placed this benefit somewhere else.

*True.* Why so?

*Cler.* 'Slight, you have done the most inconsiderate, rash, weak thing, that ever man did to his friend.

*Daup.* Friend! if the most malicious enemy I have, had studied to inflict an injury upon me, it could not be a greater.

*True.* Wherein, for God's sake? Gentlemen, come to yourselves again.

*Daup.* But I presaged thus much afore to you.

*Cler.* Would my lips had been solder'd when I spake on't! 'Slight, what moved you to be thus impertinent?

*True.* My masters, do not put on this strange face to pay my courtesy; off with this vizor. Have good turns done you, and thank 'em this way!

*Daup.* 'Fore heaven, you have undone me. That which I have plotted for, and been maturing now these four months, you have blasted in a minute: Now I am lost, I may speak. This gentlewoman was lodged here by me o' purpose, and, to be put upon my uncle, hath profest this obstinate silence for my sake; being my entire friend, and one that for the requital of such a fortune as to marry him, would have made me very ample conditions; where now, all my hopes are utterly miscarried by this unlucky accident.

*Cler.* Thus 'tis when a man will be ignorantly officious, do services, and not know his why; I wonder what courteous itch possest you. You never did absurder part in your life, nor a greater trespass to friendship or humanity.

*Daup.* Faith, you may forgive it best; 'twas your cause principally.

*Cler.* I know it; would it had not.

*Enter* CUTBEARD

*Daup.* How now, Cutbeard! what news?

*Cut.* The best, the happiest that ever was, sir. There has been a mad gentleman with your uncle this morning [*seeing* TRUEWIT]—I think this be the gentleman—that has almost talk'd him out of his wits, with threatening him from marriage—

*Daup.* On, I prithee.

*Cut.* And your uncle, sir, he thinks 'twas done by your procurement; therefore he will see the party you wot of presently; and if he like her, he says, and that she be so inclining to dumb as I have told him, he swears he will marry her to-day, instantly, and not defer it a minute longer.

*Daup.* Excellent! beyond our expectation!

*True.* Beyond our expectation! By this light, I knew it would be thus.

*Daup.* Nay, sweet Truewit, forgive me.

*True.* No, I was *ignorantly officious, impertinent;* this was the *absurd, weak part.*

*Cler.* Wilt thou ascribe that to merit now, was mere fortune!

*True.* Fortune! mere providence. Fortune had not a finger in't. I saw it must necessarily in nature fall out so: my genius is never false to me in these things. Shew me how it could be otherwise.

*Daup.* Nay, gentlemen, contend not; 'tis well now.

*True.* Alas, I let him go on with *inconsiderate*, and *rash*, and what he pleased.

*Cler.* Away, thou strange justifier of thyself, to be wiser than thou wert, by the event!

*True.* Event! by this light, thou shalt never persuade me, but I foresaw it as well as the stars themselves.

*Daup.* Nay, gentlemen, 'tis well now. Do you two entertain sir John Daw with discourse, while I send her away with instructions.

*True.* I'll be acquainted with her first, by your favour.

*Cler.* Master Truewit, lady, a friend of ours.[1]

*True.* I am sorry I have not known you sooner, lady, to celebrate this rare virtue of your silence.

[*Exeunt* DAUPHINE, EPICŒNE, *and* CUTBEARD

*Cler.* Faith, an you had come sooner, you should have seen and heard her well celebrated in sir John Daw's madrigals.

*True.* [*advances to* DAW]. Jack Daw, God save you! when saw you La-Foole?

*Daw.* Not since last night, master Truewit.

*True.* That's a miracle! I thought you two had been inseparable.

*Daw.* He's gone to invite his guests.

*True.* 'Odso! 'tis true! What a false memory have I towards that man! I am one:[2] I met him even now, upon that he calls his delicate fine black horse, rid into foam, with posting from place to place, and person to person, to give them the cue—

*Cler.* Lest they should forget?

*True.* Yes: There was never poor captain took more pains at a muster to shew men, than he, at this meal, to shew friends.

*Daw.* It is his quarter-feast, sir.

*Cler.* What! do you say so, sir John?

*True.* Nay, Jack Daw will not be out, at the best friends he has, to the talent of his wit: Where's his mistress, to hear and applaud him? is she gone?

*Daw.* Is mistress Epicœne gone?

*Cler.* Gone afore, with sir Dauphine, I warrant, to the place.

*True.* Gone afore! that were a manifest injury, a disgrace and a half; to refuse him at such a festival-time as this, being a bravery, and a wit too!

*Cler.* Tut, he'll swallow it like cream: he's better read in Jure civili, than to esteem any thing a disgrace, is offer'd him from a mistress.

*Daw.* Nay, let her e'en go; she shall sit alone, and be dumb in her chamber a week together, for John Daw, I warrant her. Does she refuse me?

*Cler.* No, sir, do not take it so to heart; she does not refuse you, but a little neglects you. Good faith, Truewit, you were to blame, to put it into his head, that she does refuse him.

*True.* Sir, she does refuse him palpably, however you mince it. An I were as he, I would swear to speak ne'er a word to her to-day for't.

*Daw.* By this light, no more I will not.

*True.* Nor to any body else, sir.

*Daw.* Nay, I will not say so, gentlemen.

*Cler.* [*aside*]. It had been an excellent happy condition for the company, if you could have drawn him to it.

*Daw.* I'll be very melancholy, i'faith.

*Cler.* As a dog, if I were as you, sir John.

*True.* Or a snail, or a hog-louse: I would roll myself up for this day; in troth, they should not unwind me.

*Daw.* By this pick-tooth,[3] so I will.

*Cler.* 'Tis well done: He begins already to be angry with his teeth.

*Daw:* Will you go, gentlemen?

*Cler.* Nay, you must walk alone, if you be right melancholy, sir John.

*True.* Yes, sir, we'll dog you, we'll follow you afar off. [*Exit* DAW

*Cler.* Was there ever such a two yards of knighthood measured out by time, to be sold to laughter?

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[1] Master . . . ours: said to Epicœne.

[2] I . . . one: i.e., one of the guests.

[3] pick-tooth: now reversed.

*True.* A mere talking mole, hang him! no mushroom was ever so fresh. A fellow so utterly nothing, as he knows not what he would be.

*Cler.* Let's follow him: but first let's go to Dauphine, he's hovering about the house to hear what news.

*True.* Content. [*Exeunt*

### SCENE III

*A Room in Morose's House*

*Enter* MOROSE *and* MUTE, *followed by* CUTBEARD *with* EPICŒNE

*Mor.* Welcome, Cutbeard! draw near with your fair charge: and in her ear softly entreat her to unmask. [EPICŒNE *takes off her mask.*]—So! Is the door shut? [MUTE *makes a leg.*]—Enough. Now, Cutbeard, with the same discipline I use to my family, I will question you. As I conceive, Cutbeard, this gentlewoman is she you have provided, and brought, in hope she will fit me in the place and person of a wife? Answer me not but with your leg, unless it be otherwise: [CUTBEARD *makes a leg.*]—Very well done, Cutbeard. I conceive, besides, Cutbeard, you have been preacquainted with her birth, education, and qualities, or else you would not prefer her to my acceptance, in the weighty consequence of marriage. [*Makes a leg.*]—This I conceive, Cutbeard. Answer me not but with your leg, unless it be otherwise. [*Bows again.*]—Very well done, Cutbeard. Give aside now a little, and leave me to examine her condition, and aptitude to my affection. [*Goes about her and views her.*]—She is exceeding fair, and of a special good favour; a sweet composition or harmony of limbs; her temper of beauty has the true height of my blood. The knave hath exceedingly well fitted me without: I will now try her within.—Come near, fair gentlewoman; let not my behaviour seem rude, though unto you, being rare, it may haply appear strange. [EPICŒNE *curtsies.*] Nay, lady, you may speak, though Cutbeard and my man might not; for of all sounds, only the sweet voice of a fair lady has the just length of mine ears. I beseech you, say, lady; out of the first fire of meeting eyes, they say, love is stricken: do you feel any such motion suddenly shot into you, from any part you see in me? ha, lady? [EPICŒNE *curtsies.*]—Alas, lady, these answers by silent curtsies from you are too courtless and simple. I have ever had my breeding in court; and she that shall be my wife, must be accomplished with courtly and audacious ornaments. Can you speak, lady?

*Epi.* [*softly*]. Judge you, forsooth.

*Mor.* What say you, lady? Speak out, I beseech you.

*Epi.* Judge you, forsooth.

*Mor.* On my judgment, a divine softness! But can you naturally, lady, as I enjoin these by doctrine and industry, refer yourself to the search of my judgment, and, not taking pleasure in your tongue, which is a woman's chiefest pleasure, think it plausible to answer me by silent gestures, so long as my speeches jump[1] right with what you conceive? [EPICŒNE *curtsies.*]—Excellent! divine! if it were possible she should hold out thus!—Peace, Cutbeard, thou art made for ever, as thou hast made me, if this felicity have lasting: but I will try her further. Dear lady, I am courtly, I tell you, and I must have mine ears banqueted with pleasant and witty conferences, pretty girls, scoffs, and dalliance in her that I mean to choose. The ladies in court think it a most desperate impair to their quickness of wit, and good carriage, if they cannot give occasion for a man to court 'em; and when amorous discourse is set on foot, minister as good matter to continue it, as himself: And do you alone so much differ from all them, that what they, with so much circumstance, affect and toil for, to seem learn'd, to seem judicious, to seem sharp and conceited, you can bury in yourself with silence, and rather trust your graces to the fair conscience of virtue, than to the world's or your own proclamation?

*Epi.* [*softly*]. I should be sorry else.

*Mor.* What say you, lady? good lady, speak out.

*Epi.* I should be sorry else.

---

[1] jump: agree.

*Mor.* That sorrow doth fill me with gladness. O Morose, thou art happy above mankind! pray that thou mayest contain thyself. I will only put her to it once more, and it shall be with the utmost touch and test of their sex. But hear me, fair lady; I do also love to see her whom I shall choose, to be the first and principal in all fashions, precede all the dames at court by a fortnight, have council of tailors, lineners, lace-women, embroiderers: and sit with them sometimes twice a day upon French intelligences, and then come forth varied like nature, or oftener than she, and better by the help of art, her emulous servant. This do I affect: and how will you be able, lady, with this frugality of speech, to give the manifold but necessary instructions, for that bodice, these sleeves, those skirts, this cut, that stitch, this embroidery, that lace, this wire, those knots, that ruff, those roses, this girdle, that fan, the t'other scarf, these gloves? Ha! what say you, lady?

*Epi.* [*softly*]. I'll leave it to you, sir.

*Mor.* How, lady? pray you rise a note.

*Epi.* I leave it to wisdom and you, sir.

*Mor.* Admirable creature! I will trouble you no more: I will not sin against so sweet a simplicity. Let me now be bold to print on those divine lips the seal of being mine.—Cutbeard, I give thee the lease of thy house free, thank me not but with thy leg. [Cutbeard *shakes his head.*]—I know what thou wouldst say, she's poor, and her friends deceased. She has brought a wealthy dowry in her silence, Cutbeard; and in respect of her poverty, Cutbeard, I shall have her more loving and obedient, Cutbeard. Go thy ways, and get me a minister presently, with a soft low voice, to marry us; and pray him he will not be impertinent, but brief as he can; away: softly, Cutbeard. [*Exit* Cutbeard.]—Sirrah, conduct your mistress into the dining-room, your now mistress. [*Exit* Mute, *followed by* Epicœne.]—O my felicity! how shall I be revenged on mine insolent kinsman, and his plots to fright me from marrying! He would be knighted, forsooth, and thought by that means to reign over me; his title must do it: No, kinsman, I will now make you bring me the tenth lord's and the sixteenth lady's letter, kinsman; and it shall do you no good, kinsman. Your knighthood itself shall come on its knees, and it shall be rejected; it shall be sued for its fees to execution, and not be redeem'd; it shall cheat at the twelve-penny ordinary,[1] it[2] knighthood, for its diet, all the term-time, and tell tales for it in the vacation to the hostess; or it knighthood shall do worse, take sanctuary in Cole-harbour,[3] and fast. It shall fright all it friends with borrowing letters; and when one of the fourscore hath brought it knighthood ten shillings, it knighthood shall go to the Cranes, or the Bear at the Bridge-foot, and be drunk in fear; it shall not have money to discharge one tavern-reckoning, to invite the old creditors to forbear it knighthood, or the new, that should be, to trust it knighthood. It shall be the tenth name in the bond to take up the commodity of pipkins and stone-jugs: and the part thereof shall not furnish it knighthood forth for the attempting of a baker's widow, a brown baker's widow. It shall give it knighthood's name for a stallion, to all gamesome citizens' wives, and be refused, when the master of a dancing-school, or how do you call him, the worst reveller in the town is taken: it shall want clothes, and by reason of that, wit, to fool to lawyers. It shall not have hope to repair itself by Constantinople, Ireland, or Virginia; but the best and last fortune to it knighthood shall be to make Dol Tear-sheet, or Kate Common a lady, and so it knighthood may eat.

[*Exit*

### SCENE IV

*A Lane, near Morose's House*

*Enter* Truewit, Dauphine, *and* Clerimont

*True.* Are you sure he is not gone by?

*Daup.* No, I staid in the shop ever since.

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[1] ordinary: tavern.

[2] it: its (sarcastically for *your*).

[3] Cole-harbour: resort of gamblers.

*Cler.* But he may take the other end of the lane.

*Daup.* No, I told him I would be here at this end: I appointed him hither.

*True.* What a barbarian it is to stay then!

*Daup.* Yonder he comes.

*Cler.* And his charge left behind him, which is a very good sign, Dauphine.

*Enter* CUTBEARD

*Daup.* How now, Cutbeard! succeeds it, or no?

*Cut.* Past imagination, sir, *omnia secunda;*[1] you could not have pray'd to have had it so well. *Saltat senex,*[2] as it is in the proverb; he does triumph in his felicity, admires the party! he has given me the lease of my house too! and I am now going for a silent minister to marry them, and away.

*True.* 'Slight! get one of the silenced[3] ministers; a zealous brother would torment him purely.

*Cut. Cum privilegio,*[4] sir.

*Daup.* O, by no means; let's do nothing to hinder it now: when 'tis done and finished, I am for you, for any device of vexation.

*Cut.* And that shall be within this half hour, upon my dexterity, gentlemen. Contrive what you can in the mean time, *bonis avibus.*[5] [*Exit*

*Cler.* How the slave doth Latin it!

*True.* It would be made a jest to posterity, sirs, this day's mirth, if ye will.

*Cler.* Beshrew his heart that will not, I pronounce.

*Daup.* And for my part. What is it?

*True.* To translate all La-Foole's company, and his feast thither, to-day, to celebrate this bride-ale.[6]

*Daup.* Ay, marry; but how will't be done?

*True.* I'll undertake the directing of all the lady-guests thither, and then the meat must follow.

*Cler.* For God's sake, let's effect it; it will be an excellent comedy of affliction, so many several noises.

*Daup.* But are they not at the other place, already, think you?

*True.* I'll warrant you for the college-honours: one of their faces has not the priming colour laid on yet, nor the other her smock sleek'd.

*Cler.* O, but they'll rise earlier than ordinary to a feast.

*True.* Best go see, and assure ourselves.

*Cler.* Who knows the house?

*True.* I'll lead you: Were you never there yet?

*Daup.* Not I.

*Cler.* Nor I.

*True.* Where have you lived then? not know Tom Otter!

*Cler.* No: for God's sake, what is he?

*True.* An excellent animal, equal with your Daw or La-Foole, if not transcendant; and does Latin it as much as your barber: He is his wife's subject; he calls her princess, and at such times as these follows her up and down the house like a page, with his hat off, partly for heat, partly for reverence. At this instant he is marshalling of his bull, bear, and horse.

*Daup.* What be those, in the name of Sphinx?

*True.* Why, sir, he has been a great man at the Bear-garden in his time; and from that subtle sport has ta'en the witty denomination of his chief carousing cups. One he calls his bull, another his bear, another his horse. And then he has his lesser glasses, that he calls his deer and his ape; and several degrees of them too; and never is well, nor thinks any entertainment perfect, till these be brought out, and set on the cupboard.

*Cler.* For God's love!—we should miss this, if we should not go.

*True.* Nay, he has a thousand things as good, that will speak him all day. He will rail on his wife, with certain common places, behind her back; and to her face—

*Daup.* No more of him. Let's go see him, I petition you. [*Exeunt*

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[1] **omnia secunda:** All is well.

[2] **Saltat senex:** The old man jumps (at the bait).

[3] **silenced:** Puritan.

[4] **Cum privilegio:** With privilege.

[5] **bonis avibus:** with good luck (lit., good birds).

[6] **bride-ale:** marriage festival; bridal.

## ACT III

### SCENE I

### *A Room in Otter's House*

*Enter* CAPTAIN OTTER *with his cups, and* MISTRESS OTTER

*Otter.* Nay, good princess, hear me *pauca verba.*[1]

*Mrs. Otter.* By that light, I'll have you chain'd up, with your bull-dogs and bear-dogs, if you be not civil the sooner. I'll send you to kennel, i'faith. You were best bait me with your bull, bear, and horse. Never a time that the courtiers or collegiates come to the house, but you make it a Shrove-Tuesday![2] I would have you get your Whitsuntide velvet cap, and your staff in your hand, to entertain them: yes, in troth, do.

*Ott.* Not so, princess, neither; but under correction, sweet princess, give me leave.—These things I am known to the courtiers by: It is reported to them for my humour, and they receive it so, and do expect it. Tom Otter's bull, bear, and horse is known all over England, *in rerum natura.*[3]

*Mrs. Ott.* 'Fore me, I will *na-ture* them over to Paris-garden,[4] and *na-ture* you thither too, if you pronounce them again. Is a bear a fit beast, or a bull, to mix in society with great ladies? think in your discretion, in any good policy.

*Ott.* The horse then, good princess.

*Mrs. Ott.* Well, I am contented for the horse; they love to be well horsed, I know: I love it myself.

*Ott.* And it is a delicate fine horse this: *Poetarum Pegasus.*[5] Under correction,[6] princess, Jupiter did turn himself into a —*taurus*,[7] or bull, under correction, good princess.

*Enter* TRUEWIT, CLERIMONT, *and* DAUPHINE, *behind*

*Mrs. Ott.* By my integrity, I'll send you over to the Bank-side; I'll commit you to the master of the Garden, if I hear but a syllable more. Must my house or my roof be polluted with the scent of bears and bulls, when it is perfumed for great ladies? Is this according to the instrument, when I married you? that I would be princess, and reign in mine own house; and you would be my subject, and obey me? What did you bring me, should make you thus peremptory? do I allow you your half-crown a day, to spend where you will, among your gamesters, to vex and torment me at such times as these? Who gives you your maintenance, I pray you? who allows you your horse-meat and man's meat? your three suits of apparel a year? your four pair of stockings, one silk, three worsted? your clean linen, your bands and cuffs, when I can get you to wear them?—'tis marle[8] you have them on now.—Who graces you with courtiers or great personages, to speak to you out of their coaches, and come home to your house? Were you ever so much as look'd upon by a lord or a lady, before I married you, but on the Easter or Whitsun-holidays? and then out at the banqueting-house window, when Ned Whiting or George Stone[9] were at the stake?

*True.* For God's sake, let's go stave her off him.

*Mrs. Ott.* Answer me to that. And did not I take you up from thence, in an old greasy buff-doublet, with points, and green velvet sleeves, out at the elbows? you forget this.

*True.* She'll worry him, if we help not in time.

*They come forward*

*Mrs. Ott.* O, here are some of the gallants! Go to, behave yourself distinctly,[10] and with good morality; or, I protest, I'll take away your exhibition.[11]

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[1] **pauca verba:** a few words.

[2] **Shrove-Tuesday:** see Act I, Scene 1, line 217 (page 255).

[3] **in rerum natura:** in the nature of things.

[4] **Paris-garden:** the bear garden on the Bankside (in Southwark).

[5] **Poetarum Pegasus:** Pegasus (winged horse) of the poets.

[6] **under correction:** subject to contradiction.

[7] **taurus:** bull.

[8] **marle:** marvel.

[9] **Ned . . . Stone:** famous bears, who went by the name of their owners.

[10] **distinctly:** with distinction; politely.

[11] **exhibition:** allowance.

*True.* By your leave, fair mistress Otter, I'll be bold to enter these gentlemen in your acquaintance.

*Mrs. Ott.* It shall not be obnoxious, or difficil, sir.

*True.* How does my noble captain? is the bull, bear, and horse in *rerum natura* still?

*Ott.* Sir, *sic visum superis.*[1]

*Mrs. Ott.* I would you would but intimate them, do. Go your ways in, and get toasts and butter made for the woodcocks: that's a fit province for you.

*Drives him off.*

*Cler.* Alas, what a tyranny is this poor fellow married to!

*True.* O, but the sport will be anon, when we get him loose.

*Daup.* Dares he ever speak?

*True.* No Anabaptist[2] ever rail'd with the like license: but mark her language in the mean time, I beseech you.

*Mrs. Ott.* Gentlemen, you are very aptly come. My cousin, sir Amorous, will be here briefly.

*True.* In good time, lady. Was not sir John Daw here, to ask for him, and the company?

*Mrs. Ott.* I cannot assure you, master Truewit. Here was a very melancholy knight in a ruff, that demanded my subject for somebody, a gentleman, I think.

*Cler.* Ay, that was he, lady.

*Mrs. Ott.* But he departed straight, I can resolve you.

*Daup.* What an excellent choice phrase this lady expresses in.

*True.* O, sir, she is the only authentical courtier, that is not naturally bred one, in the city.

*Mrs. Ott.* You have taken that report upon trust, gentlemen.

*True.* No, I assure you, the court governs it so, lady, in your behalf.

*Mrs. Ott.* I am the servant of the court and courtiers, sir.

*True.* They are rather your idolaters.

*Mrs. Ott.* Not so, sir.

*Enter* Cutbeard

*Daup.* How now, Cutbeard! any cross?

*Cut.* O no, sir, *omnia bene.*[3] 'Twas never better on the hinges; all's sure. I have so pleased him with a curate, that he's gone to't almost with the delight he hopes for soon.

*Daup.* What is he for a vicar?[4]

*Cut.* One that has catch'd a cold, sir, and can scarce be heard six inches off; as if he spoke out of a bulrush that were not pick'd, or his throat were full of pith: a fine quick fellow, and an excellent barber of prayers.[5] I came to tell you, sir, that you might *omnem movere lapidem,*[6] as they say, be ready with your vexation.

*Daup.* Gramercy, honest Cutbeard! be thereabouts with thy key, to let us in.

*Cut.* I will not fail you, sir; *ad manum.*[7] [*Exit*

*True.* Well, I'll go watch my coaches.

*Cler.* Do; and we'll send Daw to you, if you meet him not. [*Exit* Truewit

*Mrs. Ott.* Is master Truewit gone?

*Daup.* Yes, lady, there is some unfortunate business fallen out.

*Mrs. Ott.* So I adjudged by the physiognomy of the fellow that came in; and I had a dream last night too of the new pageant, and my lady mayoress, which is always very ominous to me. I told it my lady Haughty t'other day, when her honour came hither to see some China stuffs; and she expounded it out of Artemidorus,[8] and I have found it since very true. It has done me many affronts.

*Cler.* Your dream, lady?

*Mrs. Ott.* Yes, sir, any thing I do but dream of the city. It stain'd me a damask table-cloth, cost me eighteen pound, at one time; and burnt me a black satin gown, as I stood by the fire, at my lady Centaure's chamber in the college, another time. A third time, at the lords' masque, it dropt all my wire and my ruff with wax candle, that I could not go up to the banquet. A fourth time, as I was taking coach to go to Ware, to meet a friend, it dash'd me a new suit all over (a crimson satin doublet, and black velvet skirts), that I was fain to go in and shift me, and kept my chamber a leash of days for the anguish of it.

---

[1] **sic . . . superis:** So it seemed to the gods!

[2] **Anabaptist:** a sect whose fanaticism led them into violent denunciations.

[3] **omnia bene:** all is well.

[4] **What . . . vicar:** Who is to be vicar?

[5] **barber . . . prayers:** cuts them short.

[6] **omnem . . . lapidem:** leave no stone unturned.

[7] **ad manum:** at hand; in readiness.

[8] **Artemidorus:** a work on interpretation of dreams by a soothsayer, Artemidorus, of the 2nd century.

*Daup.* These were dire mischances, lady.

*Cler.* I would not dwell in the city, an 'twere so fatal to me.

*Mrs. Ott.* Yes, sir; but I do take advice of my doctor to dream of it as little as I can.

*Daup.* You do well, mistress Otter.

*Enter* Sir John Daw, *and is taken aside by* Clerimont

*Mrs. Ott.* Will it please you to enter the house farther, gentlemen?

*Daup.* And your favour, lady: but we stay to speak with a knight, sir John Daw, who is here come. We shall follow you, lady.

*Mrs. Ott.* At your own time, sir. It is my cousin sir Amorous his feast—

*Daup.* I know it, lady.

*Mrs. Ott.* And mine together. But it is for his honour, and therefore I take no name of it, more than of the place.

*Daup.* You are a bounteous kinswoman.

*Mrs. Ott.* Your servant, sir. [*Exit*

*Cler.* [*coming forward with* Daw]. Why, do not you know it, sir John Daw?

*Daw.* No, I am a rook[1] if I do.

*Cler.* I'll tell you, then; she's married by this time. And, whereas you were put in the head, that she was gone with sir Dauphine, I assure you, sir Dauphine has been the noblest, honestest friend to you, that ever gentleman of your quality could boast of. He has discover'd the whole plot, and made your mistress so acknowledging, and indeed so ashamed of her injury to you, that she desires you to forgive her, and but grace her wedding with your presence to-day —She is to be married to a very good fortune, she says, his uncle, old Morose.

*Daw.* Did she say so, i'faith?

*Cler.* Why, what do you think of me, sir John? ask sir Dauphine.

*Daw.* Nay, I believe you.—Good sir Dauphine, did she desire me to forgive her?

*Daup.* I assure you, sir John, she did.

*Daw.* Nay, then, I do with all my heart, and I'll be jovial.

*Cler.* Yes, for look you, sir, this was the injury to you. La-Foole intended this feast to honour her bridal day, and made you the property[2] to invite the college ladies, and promise to bring her; and then at the time she would have appear'd, as his friend, to have given you the dor.[3] Whereas now, sir Dauphine has brought her to a feeling of it, with this kind of satisfaction, that you shall bring all the ladies to the place where she is, and be very jovial; and there, she will have a dinner, which shall be in your name: and so disappoint La-Foole, to make you good again, and, as it were, a saver in the main.

*Daw.* As I am a knight, I honour her; and forgive her heartily.

*Cler.* About it then presently. Truewit is gone before to confront the coaches, and to acquaint you with so much, if he meet you. Join with him, and 'tis well.—

*Enter* Sir Amorous La-Foole

See; here comes your antagonist; but take you no notice, but be very jovial.

*La-F.* Are the ladies come, sir John Daw, and your mistress? [*Exit* Daw.]— Sir Dauphine! you are exceeding welcome, and honest master Clerimont. Where's my cousin? did you see no collegiates, gentlemen?

*Daup.* Collegiates! do you not hear, sir Amorous, how you are abused?

*La-F.* How, sir!

*Cler.* Will you speak so kindly to sir John Daw, that has done you such an affront?

*La-F.* Wherein, gentlemen? let me be a suitor to you to know, I beseech you.

*Cler.* Why, sir, his mistress is married to-day to sir Dauphine's uncle, your cousin's neighbour, and he has diverted all the ladies, and all your company thither, to frustrate your provision, and stick a disgrace upon you. He was here now to have enticed us away from you too: but we told him his own, I think.

---

[1] rook: dupe; easy mark.

[2] made . . . property: made yours the duty.

[3] have . . . dor: to have made a fool of you.

*La-F.* Has sir John Daw wrong'd me so inhumanly?

*Daup.* He has done it, sir Amorous, most maliciously and treacherously: but, if you'll be ruled by us, you shall quit him, i'faith.

*La-F.* Good gentlemen, I'll make one, believe it. How, I pray?

*Daup.* Marry, sir, get me your pheasants, and your godwits, and your best meat, and dish it in silver dishes of your cousin's presently; and say nothing, but clap me a clean towel about you, like a sewer;[1] and, bare-headed, march afore it with a good confidence, ('tis but over the way, hard by,) and we'll second you, where you shall set it on the board, and bid them welcome to't, which shall shew 'tis yours, and disgrace his preparation utterly: and for your cousin, whereas she should be troubled here at home with care of making and giving welcome, she shall transfer all that labour thither, and be a principal guest herself; sit rank'd with the college-honours, and be honour'd, and have her health drunk as often, as bare and as loud as the best of them.

*La-F.* I'll go tell her presently. It shall be done, that's resolved. [*Exit*

*Cler.* I thought he would not hear it out, but 'twould take him.

*Daup.* Well, there be guests and meat now; how shall we do for music?

*Cler.* The smell of the venison, going through the street, will invite one noise of fiddlers or other.

*Daup.* I would it would call the trumpeters hither!

*Cler.* Faith, there is hope: they have intelligence of all feasts. There's good correspondence betwixt them and the London cooks: 'tis twenty to one but we have them.

*Daup.* 'Twill be a most solemn day for my uncle, and an excellent fit of mirth for us.

*Cler.* Ay, if we can hold up the emulation betwixt Foole and Daw, and never bring them to expostulate.[2]

*Daup.* Tut, flatter them both, as Truewit says, and you may take their understandings in a purse-net.[3] They'll believe themselves to be just such men as we make them, neither more nor less. They have nothing, not the use of their senses, but by tradition.

*Re-enter* LA-FOOLE, *like a Sewer*

*Cler.* See! sir Amorous has his towel on already. Have you persuaded your cousin?

*La-F.* Yes, 'tis very feasible: she'll do any thing, she says, rather than the La-Fooles shall be disgraced.

*Daup.* She is a noble kinswoman. It will be such a pestling device, sir Amorous; it will pound all your enemy's practices to powder, and blow him up with his own mine, his own train.

*La-F.* Nay, we'll give fire, I warrant you.

*Cler.* But you must carry it privately, without any noise, and take no notice by any means—

*Re-enter* CAPTAIN OTTER

*Ott.* Gentlemen, my princess says you shall have all her silver dishes, *festinate*:[4] and she's gone to alter her tire a little, and go with you—

*Cler.* And yourself too, captain Otter?

*Daup.* By any means, sir.

*Ott.* Yes, sir, I do mean it: but I would entreat my cousin sir Amorous, and you, gentlemen, to be suitors to my princess, that I may carry my bull and my bear, as well as my horse.

*Cler.* That you shall do, captain Otter.

*La-F.* My cousin will never consent, gentlemen.

*Daup.* She must consent, sir Amorous, to reason.

*La-F.* Why, she says they are no decorum among ladies.

*Ott.* But they are *decora*,[5] and that's better, sir.

---

[1] sewer: a household officer in charge of serving a royal banquet.

[2] expostulate: to talk earnestly; to examine into the matter.

[3] purse-net: now reversed.

[4] festinate: shortly.

[5] decora: Otter corrects La-Foole's Latin by making *decorum* plural to accord with the verb.

*Cler.* Ay, she must hear argument. Did not Pasiphaë, who was a queen, love a bull? and was not Calisto, the mother of Arcas, turn'd into a bear, and made a star, mistress Ursula, in the heavens?

*Ott.* O lord! that I could have said as much! I will have these stories painted in the Bear-garden, *ex Ovidii metamorphosi*.[1]

*Daup.* Where is your princess, captain? pray, be our leader.

*Ott.* That I shall, sir.

*Cler.* Make haste, good sir Amorous. [*Exeunt*

## SCENE II

### *A Room in Morose's House*

*Enter* MOROSE, EPICŒNE, PARSON, *and* CUTBEARD

*Mor.* Sir, there's an angel[2] for yourself, and a brace of angels for your cold. Muse not at this manage[3] of my bounty. It is fit we should thank fortune, double to nature,[4] for any benefit she confers upon us; besides, it is your imperfection, but my solace.

*Parson* [*speaks as having a cold*]. I thank your worship; so it is mine, now.

*Mor.* What says he, Cutbeard?

*Cut.* He says, *præsto*,[5] sir, whensoever your worship needs him, he can be ready with the like. He got this cold with sitting up late, and singing catches with cloth-workers.[6]

*Mor.* No more. I thank him.

*Par.* God keep your worship, and give you much joy with your fair spouse!—uh! uh! uh!

*Mor.* O, O! stay, Cutbeard! let him give me five shillings of my money back. As it is bounty to reward benefits, so it is equity to mulct injuries. I will have it. What says he?

*Cler.* He cannot change it, sir.

*Mor.* It must be changed.

*Cut.* [*aside to* PARSON]. Cough again.

*Mor.* What says he?

*Cut.* He will cough out the rest, sir.

*Par.* Uh, uh, uh!

*Mor.* Away, away with him! stop his mouth! away! I forgive it.—

[*Exit* CUTBEARD *thrusting out the* PARSON

*Epi.* Fie, master Morose, that you will use this violence to a man of the church.

*Mor.* How!

*Epi.* It does not become your gravity, or breeding, as you pretend, in court, to have offer'd this outrage on a waterman, or any more boisterous creature, much less on a man of his civil coat.

*Mor.* You can speak then!

*Epi.* Yes, sir.

*Mor.* Speak out, I mean.

*Epi.* Ay, sir. Why, did you think you had married a statue, or a motion,[7] only? one of the French puppets, with the eyes turn'd with a wire? or some innocent out of the hospital,[8] that would stand with her hands thus, and a plaise[9] mouth, and look upon you?

*Mor.* O immodesty! a manifest woman! What, Cutbeard!

*Epi.* Nay, never quarrel with Cutbeard, sir; it is too late now. I confess it doth bate somewhat of the modesty I had, when I writ simply maid: but I hope I shall make it a stock still competent to the estate and dignity of your wife.

*Mor.* She can talk!

*Epi.* Yes, indeed, sir.

*Enter* MUTE

*Mor.* What sirrah! None of my knaves there? where is this impostor Cutbeard?

MUTE *makes signs.*

*Epi.* Speak to him, fellow, speak to him! I'll have none of his coacted,[10] unnatural dumbness in my house, in a family where I govern. [*Exit* MUTE

---

[1] ex . . . metamorphosi: from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*.

[2] angel: gold piece.

[3] manage: administration.

[4] thank fortune . . . . nature: double bounty (two angels) for the cold (your fortune) to one angel for yourself (nature).

[5] præsto: immediately.

[6] singing . . . cloth-workers: cf. *Twelfth Night*, Act II, Sc. 3, l. 60; also *I Henry IV*, Act. II, Sc. 4, l. 145. Flemish weavers used to sing at their work.

[7] motion: marionette.

[8] some . . . hospital: simpleton.

[9] plaise: puckered or drawn to one side.

[10] coacted: forced.

*Mor.* She is my regent already! I have married a Penthesilea,[1] a Semiramis,[2] sold my liberty to a distaff.

*Enter* Truewit

*True.* Where's master Morose?

*Mor.* Is he come again! Lord have mercy upon me!

*True.* I wish you all joy, mistress Epicœne, with your grave and honourable match.

*Epi.* I return you the thanks, master Truewit, so friendly a wish deserves.

*Mor.* She has acquaintance, too!

*True.* God save you, sir, and give you all contentment in your fair choice, here! Before, I was the bird of night to you, the owl; but now I am the messenger of peace, a dove, and bring you the glad wishes of many friends to the celebration of this good hour.

*Mor.* What hour, sir?

*True.* Your marriage hour, sir. I commend your resolution, that, notwithstanding all the dangers I laid afore you, in the voice of a night-crow, would yet go on, and be yourself. It shews you are a man constant to your own ends, and upright to your purposes, that would not be put off with left-handed[3] cries.

*Mor.* How should you arrive at the knowledge of so much?

*True.* Why, did you ever hope, sir, committing the secrecy of it to a barber, that less than the whole town should know it? you might as well have told it the conduit, or the bake-house, or the infantry that follow the court, and with more security. Could your gravity forget so old and noted a remnant, as, *lippis et tonsoribus notum?*[4] Well, sir, forgive it yourself now, the fault, and be communicable with your friends. Here will be three or four fashionable ladies from the college to visit you presently, and their train of minions and followers.

*Mor.* Bar my doors! bar my doors! Where are all my eaters?[5] my mouths, now?—

*Enter* Servants

Bar up my doors, you varlets!

*Epi.* He is a varlet that stirs to such an office. Let them stand open. I would see him that dares move his eyes toward it. Shall I have a barricado made against my friends, to be barr'd of any pleasure they can bring in to me with their honourable visitation?

[*Exeunt* Servants

*Mor.* O Amazonian impudence!

*True.* Nay, faith, in this, sir, she speaks but reason. Give the day to open pleasures, and jollities of feasting, of music, of revels, of discourse: we'll have all, sir, that may make your Hymen high and happy.

*Mor.* O my torment, my torment!

*True.* Nay, if you endure the first half hour, sir, so tediously, and with this irksomeness; what comfort or hope can this fair gentlewoman make to herself hereafter, in the consideration of so many years as are to come.

*Mor.* Of my affliction. Good sir, depart, and let her do it alone.

*True.* I have done, sir.

*Mor.* That cursed barber.

*True.* Yes, faith, a cursed wretch indeed, sir.

*Mor.* Some plague above the plague—

*True.* All Egypt's ten plagues.

*Mor.* Revenge me on him!

*True.* 'Tis very well, sir. If you laid on a curse or two more, I'll assure you he'll bear them. As, that he may get the pox with seeking to cure it, sir; or, that while he is curling another man's hair, his own may drop off; or, for burning some lock, he may have his brain beat out with the curling iron.

*Mor.* No, let the wretch live wretched. May he get the itch, and his shop so lousy, as no man dare come at him, nor he come at no man!

*True.* Ay, and if he would swallow all his balls for pills, let not them purge him.

*Mor.* Let his warming-pan be ever cold.

*True.* A perpetual frost underneath it, sir.

*Mor.* Let him never hope to see fire again.

---

[1] Penthesilea: Queen of the Amazons.

[2] Semiramis: a mythical Queen of Babylon.

[3] left-handed: unlucky.

[4] lippis . . . notum: "known to all the blear-eyed and the barbers." See *Horace*, Book I, Satire 7, l. 3.

[5] eaters: servants.

*True.* But in hell, sir.

*Mor.* His chairs be always empty, his scissors rust, and his combs mould in their cases.

*True.* Very dreadful that! And may he lose the invention, sir, of carving lanterns in paper.

*Mor.* Let him be glad to eat his sponge for bread.

*True.* And drink lotium[1] to it, and much good to him.

*Mor.* Or, for want of bread.

*True.* Eat ear-wax, sir. I'll help you. Or, draw his own teeth, and add them to the lute-string.

*Mor.* No, beat the old ones to powder, and make bread of them.

*True.* Yes, make meal of the millstones.

*Mor.* May all the botches and burns that he has cured on others break out upon him.

*True.* And he now forget the cure of them in himself, sir; or, if he do remember it, let him have scraped all his linen into lint for't, and have not a rag left him for to set up with.

*Mor.* Let him never set up again, but have the gout in his hands for ever!—Now, no more, sir.

*True.* O, that last was too high set; you might go less with him, i'faith, and be revenged enough: as, that he be never able to new-paint his pole—

*Mor.* Good sir, no more, I forgot myself.

*True.* Or, want credit to take up with a comb-maker—

*Mor.* No more, sir.

*True.* Or, having broken his glass in a former despair, fall now into a much greater, of ever getting another—

*Mor.* I beseech you, no more.

*True.* Or, that he never be trusted with trimming of any but chimney-sweepers—

*Mor.* Sir—

*True.* Or, may he cut a collier's throat with his razor, by chance-medley, and yet be hang'd for't.

*Mor.* I will forgive him, rather than hear any more. I beseech you, sir.

*Enter* DAW, *introducing* LADY HAUGHTY, CENTAURE, MAVIS, *and* TRUSTY

*Daw.* This way, madam.

*Mor.* O, the sea breaks in upon me! another flood! an inundation! I shall be overwhelmed with noise. It beats already at my shores. I feel an earthquake in my self for't.

*Daw.* 'Give you joy, mistress.

*Mor.* Has she servants too!

*Daw.* I have brought some ladies here to see and know you. My lady Haughty,—[*As he presents them severally,* EPICŒNE *kisses them.*] this my lady Centaure—mistress Dol Mavis—mistress Trusty, my lady Haughty's woman. Where's your husband? let's see him: can he endure no noise? let me come to him.

*Mor.* What nomenclator[2] is this!

*True.* Sir John Daw, sir, your wife's servant, this.

*Mor.* A Daw,[3] and her servant! O, 'tis decreed, 'tis decreed of me, an she have such servants. [*Going*

*True.* Nay, sir, you must kiss the ladies; you must not go away, now: they come toward you to seek you out.

*Haughty.* I'faith, master Morose, would you steal a marriage thus, in the midst of so many friends, and not acquaint us? Well, I'll kiss you, notwithstanding the justice of my quarrel: you shall give me leave, mistress, to use a becoming familiarity with your husband.

*Epi.* Your ladyship does me an honour in it, to let me know he is so worthy your favour: as you have done both him and me grace to visit so unprepared a pair to entertain you.

*Mor.* Compliment! compliment!

*Epi.* But I must lay the burden of that upon my servant here.

MOROSE *walks aside while the rest talk apart.*

*Hau.* Is this the silent woman?

*Centaure.* Nay, she has found her tongue since she was married, Master Truewit says.

*Hau.* O, master Truewit! 'save you. What kind of creature is your bride here? she speaks, methinks!

---

[1] **lotium:** his own cosmetics.

[2] **nomenclator:** official announcer.

[3] **Daw:** a simpleton;—from the silliness ascribed to jackdaws.

*True.* Yes, madam, believe it, she is a gentlewoman of very absolute behaviour, and of a good race.

*Hau.* And Jack Daw told us she could not speak!

*True.* So it was carried in plot, madam, to put her upon this old fellow, by sir Dauphine, his nephew, and one or two more of us: but she is a woman of an excellent assurance, and an extraordinary happy wit and tongue. You shall see her make rare sport with Daw ere night.

*Hau.* And he brought us to laugh at her!

*True.* That falls out often, madam, that he that thinks himself the master-wit, is the master-fool. I assure your ladyship, ye cannot laugh at her.

*Hau.* No, we'll have her to the college: An she have wit, she shall be one of us, shall she not, Centaure? we'll make her a collegiate.

*Cen.* Yes, faith, madam, and Mavis and she will set up a side.[1]

*True.* Believe it, madam, and mistress Mavis she will sustain her part.

*Mavis.* I'll tell you that, when I have talk'd with her, and tried her.

*Hau.* Use her very civilly, Mavis.

*Mav.* [*whispers her*]. So I will, madam.

*Mor.* [*aside*]. Blessed minute! that they would whisper thus ever!

*True.* In the mean time, madam, would but your ladyship help to vex him a little: you know his disease, talk to him about the wedding ceremonies, or call for your gloves, or—

*Hau.* Let me alone. Centaure, help me.—Master bridegroom, where are you?

*Mor.* [*aside*]. O, it was too miraculously good to last!

*Hau.* We see no ensigns[2] of a wedding here; no character of a bride-ale: where be our scarves and our gloves? I pray you, give them us. Let us know your bride's colours, and yours at least.

*Cen.* Alas, madam, he has provided none.

*Mor.* Had I known your ladyship's painter, I would.

*Hau.* He has given it you, Centaure, i'faith. But do you hear, master Morose? a jest will not absolve you in this manner. You that have suck'd the milk of the court, and from thence have been brought up to the very strong meats and wine of it; been a courtier from the biggen[3] to the night-cap, as we may say, and you to offend in such a high point of ceremony as this, and let your nuptials want all marks of solemnity! How much plate have you lost to-day, (if you had but regarded your profit,) what gifts, what friends, through your mere rusticity!

*Mor.* Madam—

*Hau.* Pardon me, sir, I must insinuate your errors to you; no gloves? no garters? no scarves? no epithalamium?[4] no masque?

*Daw.* Yes, madam, I'll make an epithalamium, I promise my mistress; I have begun it already: will your ladyship hear it?

*Hau.* Ay, good Jack Daw.

*Mor.* Will it please your ladyship command a chamber, and be private with your friend? you shall have your choice of rooms to retire to after: my whole house is yours. I know it hath been your ladyship's errand into the city at other times, however now you have been unhappily diverted upon me; but I shall be loth to break any honourable custom of your ladyship's. And therefore, good madam—

*Epi.* Come, you are a rude bridegroom, to entertain ladies of honour in this fashion.

*Cen.* He is a rude groom indeed.

*True.* By that light you deserve to be grafted, and have your horns reach from one side of the island to the other.—Do not mistake me, sir; I but speak this to give the ladies some heart again, not for any malice to you.

*Mor.* Is this your bravo, ladies?

*True.* As God [shall] help me, if you utter such another word, I'll take mistress bride in, and begin to you in a very sad cup; do you see? Go to, know your friends, and such as love you.

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[1] Mavis . . . side: become partners in the game.

[2] ensigns: tokens.

[3] biggen: child's cap; i.e., from infancy to old age.

[4] epithalamium: bridal song.

*Enter* Clerimont, *followed by a number of* Musicians

*Cler.* By your leave, ladies. Do you want any music? I have brought you variety of noises.[1] [*Aside to the* Musicians, *who strike up all together.*] Play, sirs, all of you.

*Mor.* O, a plot, a plot, a plot, a plot, upon me! this day I shall be their anvil to work on, they will grate me asunder. 'Tis worse than the noise of a saw.

*Cler.* No, they are hair, rosin, and guts: I can give you the receipt.

*True.* Peace, boys!

*Cler.* Play! I say.

*True.* Peace, rascals! You see who's your friend now, sir: take courage, put on a martyr's resolution. Mock down all their attemptings with patience: 'tis but a day, and I would suffer heroically. Should an ass exceed me in fortitude? no. You betray your infirmity with your hanging dull ears, and make them insult: bear up bravely, and constantly. [La-Foole *passes over the stage as a Sewer, followed by* Servants *carrying dishes, and* Mistress Otter.]—Look you here, sir, what honour is done you unexpected, by your nephew; a wedding-dinner come, and a knight-sewer before it, for the more reputation: and fine mistress Otter, your neighbour, in the rump or tail of it.

*Mor.* Is that Gorgon, that Medusa come! hide me, hide me.

*True.* I warrant you, sir, she will not transform you. Look upon her with a good courage. Pray you entertain her, and conduct your guests in. No!—Mistress bride, will you entreat in the ladies? your bridegroom is so shame-faced, here.

*Epi.* Will it please your ladyship, madam?

*Hau.* With the benefit of your company, mistress.

*Epi.* Servant, pray you perform your duties.

*Daw.* And glad to be commanded, mistress.

*Cen.* How like you her wit, Mavis?

*Mav.* Very prettily, absolutely well.

*Mrs. Ott.* 'Tis my place.

*Mav.* You shall pardon me, mistress Otter.

*Mrs. Ott.* Why, I am a collegiate.

*Mav.* But not in ordinary.

*Mrs. Ott.* But I am.

*Mav.* We'll dispute that within.

[*Exeunt* Ladies

*Cler.* Would this had lasted a little longer.

*True.* And that they had sent for the heralds.[2]

*Enter* Captain Otter

—Captain Otter! what news?

*Ott.* I have brought my bull, bear, and horse, in private, and yonder are the trumpeters without, and the drum, gentlemen.

*The drum and trumpets sound within.*

*Mor.* O, O, O!

*Ott.* And we will have a rouse in each of them, anon, for bold Britons, i'faith.

*They sound again.*

*Mor.* O, O, O! [*Exit hastily*

*Omnes.* Follow, follow, follow!

[*Exeunt*

## ACT IV

### Scene I

### *A Room in Morose's House*

*Enter* Truewit *and* Clerimont

*True.* Was there ever poor bridegroom so tormented? or man, indeed?

*Cler.* I have not read of the like in the chronicles of the land.

*True.* Sure, he cannot but go to a place of rest, after all this purgatory.

*Cler.* He may presume it, I think.

*True.* The spitting, the coughing, the laughter, the neezing,[3] dancing, noise of the music, and her masculine and loud commanding, and urging the whole family, makes him think he has married a fury.

*Cler.* And she carries it up bravely.

*True.* Ay, she takes any occasion to speak: that's the height on't.

*Cler.* And how soberly Dauphine labours to satisfy him, that it was none of his plot!

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[1] variety . . . noises: several bands of musicians.

[2] heralds: officers charged with the care of genealogies;—to settle the right of precedence of the two women.

[3] neezing: sneezing.

*True.* And has almost brought him to the faith, in the article.[1] Here he comes.—

*Enter* Sir Dauphine

Where is he now? what's become of him, Dauphine?

*Daup.* O, hold me up a little, I shall go away[2] in the jest else. He has got on his whole nest of night-caps, and lock'd himself up in the top of the house, as high as ever he can climb from the noise. I peep'd in at a cranny, and saw him sitting over a cross-beam of the roof, like him on the saddler's horse in Fleetstreet, upright: and he will sleep there.

*Cler.* But where are your collegiates?

*Daup.* Withdrawn with the bride in private.

*True.* O, they are instructing her in the college-grammar. If she have grace with them, she knows all their secrets instantly.

*Cler.* Methinks the lady Haughty looks well to-day, for all my dispraise of her in the morning. I think, I shall come about to thee again,[3] Truewit.

*True.* Believe it, I told you right. Women ought to repair the losses time and years have made in their features, with dressings. And an intelligent woman, if she know by herself the least defect, will be most curious to hide it: and it becomes her. If she be short, let her sit much, lest, when she stands, she be thought to sit. If she have an ill foot, let her wear her gown the longer, and her shoe the thinner. If a fat hand, and scald[4] nails, let her carve the less, and act in gloves. If a sour breath, let her never discourse fasting, and always talk at her distance. If she have black and rugged teeth, let her offer the less at laughter, especially if she laugh wide and open.

*Cler.* O, you shall have some women, when they laugh, you would think they brayed, it is so rude and—

*True.* Ay, and others, that will stalk in their gait like an estrich,[5] and take huge strides. I cannot endure such a sight. I love measure in the feet, and number in the voice: they are gentlenesses, that oftentimes draw no less than the face.

*Daup.* How camest thou to study these creatures so exactly? I would thou wouldst make me a proficient.

*True.* Yes, but you must leave to live in your chamber, then, a month together upon Amadis de Gaul,[6] or Don Quixote, as you are wont; and come abroad where the matter is frequent, to court, to tiltings, public shows and feasts, to plays, and church sometimes: thither they come to shew their new tires[7] too, to see, and to be seen. The variety arrests his judgment. Praise them, flatter them, you shall never want eloquence or trust. With praises you must mix kisses too.

*Cler.* But all women are not to be taken all ways.

*True.* 'Tis true; no more than all birds, or all fishes. If you appear learned to an ignorant wench, or jocund to a sad, or witty to a foolish, why she presently begins to mistrust herself. You must approach them in their own height, their own line; for the contrary makes many, that fear to commit themselves to noble and worthy fellows, run into the embraces of a rascal. If she love wit, give verses, though you borrow them of a friend, or buy them, to have good. If valour, talk of your sword, and be frequent in the mention of quarrels, though you be staunch in fighting. If activity, be seen on your barbary[8] often, or leaping over stools, for the credit of your back. If she love good clothes or dressing, have your learned council about you every morning, your French tailor, barber, linener, etc. Let your powder, your glass, and your comb be your dearest acquaintance. Take more care for the ornament of your head, than the safety; and wish the commonwealth rather troubled, than a hair about you. That will take her. Then, if she be covetous and craving, do you promise any thing, and perform sparingly; so shall you keep her in appetite still. Seem as you would give, but be like a barren field, that yields little; or unlucky dice to foolish and hoping gamesters. Let your gifts be slight and dainty, rather than precious. Let cunning be above cost. Give cherries at time of year, or apricots; and say, they were sent you out of the country, though you bought them in Cheapside. Admire her tires: like her in all fashions; compare her in every habit to some deity; invent excellent dreams to flatter her, and riddles; or, if she be a great one, perform always the second parts to her: like what she likes, praise whom she praises, and fail not to make the household and servants yours, yea the whole family, and salute them by their names, ('tis but light cost, if you can purchase them so,) and make her physician your pensioner, and her chief woman. Nor will it be out of your gain to make love to her too, so she follow, not usher her lady's pleasure. All blabbing is taken away, when she comes to be a part of the crime.

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[1] **faith . . . article:** to believe it.

[2] **go away:** *pass out* (die with laughter).

[3] **come . . . thee again:** come over to your way of thinking.

[4] **scald:** shabby.

[5] **estrich:** ostrich.

[6] **Amadis de Gaul:** a famous lover in mediaeval romances.

[7] **tires:** apparel (or headdresses).

[8] **barbary:** Arabian horse.

*Daup.* On what courtly lap hast thou late slept, to come forth so sudden and absolute a courtling?

*True.* Good faith, I should rather question you, that are so hearkening after these mysteries. I begin to suspect your diligence, Dauphine. Speak, art thou in love in earnest?

*Daup.* Yes, by my troth, am I; 'twere ill dissembling before thee.

*True.* With which of them, I prithee?

*Daup.* With all the collegiates.

*Cler.* Out on thee!

*True.* No; I like him well. Men should love wisely, and all women; some one for the face, and let her please the eye; another for the skin, and let her please the touch; a third for the voice, and let her please the ear; and where the objects mix, let the senses so too. Thou would'st think it strange, if I should make them all in love with thee afore night!

*Daup.* I would say, thou hadst the best philtre in the world, and couldst do more than madam Medea,[1] or doctor Foreman.[2]

*True.* If I do not, let me play the mountebank for my meat, while I live.

*Daup.* So be it, I say.

*Enter* OTTER, *with his three Cups,* DAW, *and* LA-FOOLE

*Ott.* O lord, gentlemen, how my knights and I have missed you here!

*Cler.* Why, captain, what service, what service?

*Ott.* To see me bring up my bull, bear, and horse to fight.

*Daw.* Yes, faith, the captain says we shall be his dogs to bait them.

*Daup.* A good employment.

*True.* Come on, let's see your course, then.

*La-F.* I am afraid my cousin will be offended, if she come.

*Ott.* Be afraid of nothing.—Gentlemen, I have placed the drum and the trumpets, and one to give them the sign when you are ready. Here's my bull for myself, and my bear for sir John Daw, and my horse for sir Amorous. Now set your foot to mine, and yours to his, and—

*La-F.* Pray God my cousin come not.

*Ott.* St. George, and St. Andrew, fear no cousins. Come, sound, sound! [*Drum and trumpets sound.*] *Et rauco strepuerunt cornua cantu.*[3]

*They drink.*

*True.* Well said, captain, i'faith; well fought at the bull.

*Cler.* Well held at the bear.

*True.* Low, low! captain.

*Daup.* O, the horse has kick'd off his dog already.

*La-F.* I cannot drink it, as I am a knight.

*True.* Ods so! off with his spurs, somebody.

*La-F.* It goes against my conscience. My cousin will be angry with it.

---

[1] **Medea:** The enchantress of Greek legend. (Cf. Euripides's *Medea.*)

[2] **Foreman:** Dr. Simon Forman, a fashionable physician and astrologer.

[3] **Et . . . cantu:** And with a harsh sound the horns crashed into song.

*Daw.* I have done mine.

*True.* You fought high and fair, sir John.

*Cler.* At the head.

*Daup.* Like an excellent bear-dog.

*Cler.* You take no notice of the business, I hope?

*Daw.* Not a word, sir; you see we are jovial.

*Ott.* Sir Amorous, you must not equivocate. It must be pull'd down, for all my cousin.

*Cler.* 'Sfoot, if you take not your drink, they'll think you are discontented with something; you'll betray all, if you take the least notice

*La-F.* Not I; I'll both drink and talk then.

*Ott.* You must pull the horse on his knees, sir Amorous; fear no cousins. *Jacta est alea!*[1]

*True.* O, now he's in his vein, and bold. The least hint given him of his wife now, will make him rail desperately.

*Cler.* Speak to him of her.

*True.* Do you, and I'll fetch her to the hearing of it. [*Exit*

*Daup.* Captain He-Otter, your She-Otter is coming, your wife.

*Ott.* Wife! buz? *titivilitium!*[2] There's no such thing in nature. I confess, gentlemen, I have a cook, a laundress, a house-drudge, that serves my necessary turns, and goes under that title; but he's an ass that will be so uxorious to tie his affections to one circle. Come, the name dulls appetite. Here, replenish again; another bout. [*Fills the cups again.*] Wives are nasty, sluttish animals.

*Daup.* O, captain.

*Ott.* As ever the earth bare, *tribus verbis.*[3]—Where's master Truewit?

*Daw.* He's slipt aside, sir.

*Cler.* But you must drink and be jovial.

*Daw.* Yes, give it me.

*La-F.* And me too.

*Daw.* Let's be jovial.

*La-F.* As jovial as you will.

*Ott.* Agreed. Now you shall have the bear, cousin, and sir John Daw the horse, and I'll have the bull still. Sound, Tritons of the Thames! [*Drum and trumpets sound again.*] *Nunc est bibendum, nunc pede libero*—[4]

*Mor.* [*above*]. Villains, murderers, sons of the earth, and traitors, what do you there?

*Cler.* O, now the trumpets have waked him, we shall have his company.

*Ott.* A wife is a scurvy clogdogdo, an unlucky thing, a very foresaid bear-whelp, without any good fashion or breeding, *mala bestia.*[5]

*Re-enter* Truewit *behind, with* Mistress Otter

*Daup.* Why did you marry one then, captain?

*Ott.* A pox!—I married with six thousand pound, I. I was in love with that. I have not kissed my Fury these forty weeks.

*Cler.* The more to blame you, captain.

*True.* Nay, mistress Otter, hear him a little first.

*Ott.* She has a breath worse than my grandmother's, *profecto.*[6]

*Mrs. Ott.* O treacherous liar! kiss me, sweet master Truewit, and prove him a slandering knave.

*True.* I'll rather believe you, lady.

*Ott.* And she has a peruke that's like a pound of hemp, made up in shoe-threads.

*Mrs. Ott.* O viper, mandrake!

*Ott.* O most vile face! and yet she spends me forty pound a year in mercury and hogs-bones. All her teeth were made in the Blackfriars, both her eyebrows in the Strand, and her hair in Silver-street. Every part of the town owns a piece of her.

*Mrs. Ott.* [*comes forward*]. I cannot hold.

*Ott.* She takes herself asunder still when she goes to bed, into some twenty boxes; and about next day noon is put together again, like a great German clock: and so comes forth, and rings a tedious larum to the whole house, and then is quiet again for an hour, but for her quarters—Have you done me right, gentlemen?

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[1] **Jacta . . . alea:** The die is cast!

[2] **titivilitium:** A trifle! A mere bagatelle!

[3] **tribus verbis:** in three words.

[4] **nunc . . . libero:** Now is the time to drink, now with a free foot—

[5] **mala bestia:** evil beast.

[6] **profecto:** assuredly.

*Mrs. Ott.* [*falls upon him, and beats him*]. No, sir, I'll do you right with my quarters, with my quarters.

*Ott.* O, hold, good princess.

*Drum and trumpets sound.*

*True.* Sound, sound!

*Cler.* A battle, a battle!

*Mrs. Ott.* You notorious stinkardly bearward, does my breath smell?

*Ott.* Under correction, dear princess. —Look to my bear and my horse, gentlemen.

*Mrs. Ott.* Do I want teeth, and eyebrows, thou bull-dog?

*They sound again.*

*True.* Sound, sound still.

*Ott.* No, I protest, under correction—

*Mrs. Ott.* Ay, now you are under correction, you protest: but you did not protest before correction, sir. Thou Judas, to offer to betray thy princess! I'll make thee an example—[*Beats him.*]

*Enter* MOROSE *with his long sword*

*Mor.* I will have no such examples in my house, lady Otter.

*Mrs. Ott.* Ah!—

[MRS. OTTER, DAW, *and* LA-FOOLE *run off*

*Mor.* Mistress Mary Ambree,[1] your examples are dangerous.—Rogues, hell-hounds, Stentors![2] out of my doors, you sons of noise and tumult, begot on an ill May-day, or when the galley-foist[3] is afloat to Westminster! [*Drives out the musicians.*] A trumpeter could not be conceived but then.

*Daup.* What ails you, sir?

*Mor.* They have rent my roof, walls, and all my windows asunder, with their brazen throats. [*Exit*

*True.* Best follow him, Dauphine.

*Daup.* So I will. [*Exit*

*Cler.* Where's Daw and La-Foole?

*Ott.* They are both run away, sir. Good gentlemen, help to pacify my princess, and speak to the great ladies for me. Now must I go lie with the bears this fortnight, and keep out of the way, till my peace be made, for this scandal she has taken. Did you not see my bull-head, gentlemen?

*Cler.* Is't not on, captain?

*True.* No; but he may make a new one, by that is on.

*Ott.* O, here it is. An you come over, gentlemen, and ask for Tom Otter, we'll go down to Ratcliff, and have a course i'faith, for all these disasters. There is *bona spes*[4] left.

*True.* Away, captain, get off while you are well. [*Exit* OTTER

*Cler.* I am glad we are rid of him.

*True.* You had never been, unless we had put his wife upon him. His humour is as tedious at last, as it was ridiculous at first. [*Exeunt*

## SCENE II

### *A Long Open Gallery in the Same*

*Enter* LADY HAUGHTY, MISTRESS OTTER, MAVIS, DAW, LA-FOOLE, CENTAURE, *and* EPICŒNE

*Hau.* We wonder'd why you shriek'd so, mistress Otter.

*Mrs. Ott.* O lord, madam, he came down with a huge long naked weapon in both his hands, and look'd so dreadfully! sure he's beside himself.

*Mav.* Why, what made you there, mistress Otter?

*Mrs. Ott.* Alas, mistress Mavis, I was chastising my subject, and thought nothing of him.

*Daw.* Faith, mistress, you must do so too: learn to chastise. Mistress Otter corrects her husband so, he dares not speak but under correction.

*La-F.* And with his hat off to her: 'twould do you good to see.

*Hau.* In sadness, 'tis good and mature counsel; practise it, Morose. I'll call you Morose still now, as I call Centaure and Mavis; we four will be all one.

*Cen.* And you'll come to the college, and live with us?

*Hau.* Make him give you milk and honey.

[1] **Mistress . . . Ambree:** The heroine of an old ballad, who fought the Spaniards to avenge her lover's death.

[2] **Stentors:** Stentor was the loud-voiced herald of the Greeks in the *Iliad*.

[3] **galley-foist:** the state barge of the Lord Mayor of London.

[4] **bona spes:** good hope.

*Mav.* Look how you manage him at first, you shall have him ever after.

*Cen.* Let him allow you your coach, and four horses, your woman, your chamber-maid, your page, your gentleman-usher, your French cook, and four grooms.

*Hau.* And go with us to Bedlam,[1] to the china-houses, and to the Exchange.

*Cen.* It will open the gate to your fame.

*Hau.* Here's Centaure has immortalised herself, with taming of her wild male.

*Mav.* Ay, she has done the miracle of the kingdom.

*Enter* Clerimont *and* Truewit

*Epi.* But, ladies, do you count it lawful to have such plurality of servants, and do them all graces?

*Hau.* Why not? why should women deny their favours to men? are they the poorer or the worse?

*Daw.* Is the Thames the less for the dyers' water, mistress?

*La-F.* Or a torch for lighting many torches?

*True.* Well said, La-Foole; what a new one he has got!

*Cen.* They are empty losses women fear in this kind.

*Hau.* Besides, ladies should be mindful of the approach of age, and let no time want his due use. The best of our days pass first.

*Mav.* We are rivers, that cannot be call'd back, madam: she that now excludes her lovers, may live to lie a forsaken beldame, in a frozen bed.

*Cen.* 'Tis true, Mavis: and who will wait on us to coach then? or write, or tell us the news then, make anagrams of our names, and invite us to the Cockpit, and kiss our hands all the play-time, and draw their weapons for our honours?

*Hau.* Not one.

*Daw.* Nay, my mistress is not altogether unintelligent of these things; here be in presence have tasted of her favours.

*Cler.* What a neighing hobby-horse is this!

*Epi.* But not with intent to boast them again, servant.

*Enter* Morose *and* Dauphine

*Mor.* O my cursed angel, that instructed me to this fate!

*Daup.* Why, sir?

*Mor.* That I should be seduced by so foolish a devil as a barber will make!

*Daup.* I would I had been worthy, sir, to have partaken your counsel; you should never have trusted it to such a minister.

*Mor.* Would I could redeem it with the loss of an eye, nephew, a hand, or any other member.

*Daup.* Marry, God forbid, sir.

*Mor.* So it would rid me of her!—and, that I did supererogatory penance in a belfry, at Westminster-hall, in the Cockpit, at the fall of a stag, the Tower-wharf—what place is there else?—London-bridge, Paris-garden, Billinsgate, when the noises are at their height, and loudest. Nay, I would sit out a play, that were nothing but fights at sea, drum, trumpet, and target.[2]

*Daup.* I hope there shall be no such need, sir. Take patience, good uncle. This is but a day, and 'tis well worn too now.

*Mor.* O, 'twill be so for ever, nephew, I foresee it, for ever. Strife and tumult are the dowry that comes with a wife.

*True.* I told you so, sir, and you would not believe me.

*Mor.* Alas, do not rub those wounds, master Truewit, to blood again: 'twas my negligence. Add not affliction to affliction. I have perceived the effect of it, too late, in madam Otter.

*Epi.* How do you, sir?

*Mor.* Did you ever hear a more unnecessary question? as if she did not see! Why, I do as you see, empress, empress.

*Epi.* You are not well, sir; you look very ill: something has distemper'd you.

*Mor.* O horrible, monstrous impertinencies! would not one of these have served, do you think, sir? would not one of these have served?

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[1] Bedlam: Bethlehem; the insane asylum to which sightseers were being admitted at the time of the play.

[2] target: shield.

*True.* Yes, sir; but these are but notes of female kindness, sir; certain tokens that she has a voice, sir.

*Mor.* O, is it so! Come, an't be no otherwise——What say you?

*Epi.* How do you feel yourself, sir?

*Mor.* Again that!

*True.* Nay, look you, sir, you would be friends with your wife upon unconscionable terms; her silence.

*Epi.* They say you are run mad, sir.

*Mor.* Not for love, I assure you, of you; do you see?

*Epi.* O lord, gentlemen! lay hold on him, for God's sake. What shall I do? who's his physician, can you tell, that knows the state of his body best, that I might send for him? Good sir, speak; I'll send for one of my doctors else.

*Mor.* What, to poison me, that I might die intestate, and leave you possest of all!

*Epi.* Lord, how idly he talks, and how his eyes sparkle! he looks green about the temples! do you see what blue spots he has!

*Cler.* Ay, 'tis melancholy.

*Epi.* Gentlemen, for Heaven's sake, counsel me. Ladies,—servant, you have read Pliny[1] and Paracelsus;[2] ne'er a word now to comfort a poor gentlewoman? Ay me, what fortune had I, to marry a distracted man!

*Daw.* I'll tell you, mistress—

*True.* [*aside to* Clerimont]. How rarely she holds it up!

*Mor.* What mean you, gentlemen?

*Epi.* What will you tell me, servant?

*Daw.* The disease in Greek is called μανία, in Latin *insania, furor, vel ecstasis melancholica,* that is, *egressio,* when a man *ex melancholico evadit fanaticus.*

*Mor.* Shall I have a lecture read upon me alive?

*Daw.* But he may be but *phreneticus* yet, mistress; and *phrenetis* is only *delirium,* or so.

*Epi.* Ay, that is for the disease, servant; but what is this to the cure? We are sure enough of the disease.

*Mor.* Let me go.

*True.* Why, we'll entreat her to hold her peace, sir.

*Mor.* O no, labour not to stop her. She is like a conduit-pipe, that will gush out with more force when she opens again.

*Hau.* I'll tell you, Morose, you must talk divinity to him altogether, or moral philosophy.

*La-F.* Ay, and there's an excellent book of moral philosophy, madam, of Reynard the Fox, and all the beasts, called *Doni's Philosophy.*[3]

*Cen.* There is indeed, sir Amorous La-Foole.

*Mor.* O misery!

*La-F.* I have read it, my lady Centaure, all over, to my cousin here.

*Mrs. Ott.* Ay, and 'tis a very good book as any is, of the moderns.

*Daw.* Tut, he must have Seneca read to him, and Plutarch, and the ancients; the moderns are not for this disease.

*Cler.* Why, you discommended them too, to-day, sir John.

*Daw.* Ay, in some cases: but in these they are best, and Aristotle's ethics.

*Mav.* Say you so, sir John? I think you are deceived; you took it upon trust.

*Hau.* Where's Trusty my woman? I'll end this difference. I prithee, Otter, call her. Her father and mother were both mad, when they put her to me.[4]

*Mor.* I think so.—Nay, gentlemen, I am tame. This is but an exercise, I know, a marriage ceremony, which I must endure.

*Hau.* And one of them, I know not which, was cured with the *Sick Man's Salve,*[5] and the other with Green's *Groat's-worth of Wit.*[6]

*True.* A very cheap cure, madam.

*Enter* Trusty

*Hau.* Ay, 'tis very feasible.

*Mrs. Ott.* My lady call'd for you, mistress Trusty: you must decide a controversy.

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[1] **Pliny:** Roman naturalist and author of the 1st century A.D.

[2] **Paracelsus:** Swiss alchemist and physician of the early 15th century.

[3] **Doni's Philosophy:** A collection of Eastern fables translated from the Italian by Sir Thomas North (1570):—*The Morall Philosophie of Doni.*

[4] **put . . . me:** put her into my service.

[5] **Sick . . . Salve:** A devotional tract written by Thomas Bacon, a Calvinistical divine, and published about 1591.

[6] **Green's . . . Wit:** written by Robert Greene (1592).

*Hau.* O, Trusty, which was it you said, your father, or your mother, that was cured with the *Sick Man's Salve?*

*Trusty.* My mother, madam, with the *Salve.*

*True.* Then it was the *Sick Woman's Salve?*

*Trus.* And my father with the *Groat's-worth of Wit.* But there was other means used: we had a preacher that would preach folk asleep still; and so they were prescribed to go to church, by an old woman that was their physician, thrice a week—

*Epi.* To sleep?

*Trus.* Yes, forsooth: and every night they read themselves asleep on those books.

*Epi.* Good faith, it stands with great reason. I would I knew where to procure those books.

*Mor.* Oh!

*La-F.* I can help you with one of them, mistress Morose, the *Groat's-worth of Wit.*

*Epi.* But I shall disfurnish you, sir Amorous: can you spare it?

*La-F.* O yes, for a week, or so; I'll read it myself to him.

*Epi.* No, I must do that, sir; that must be my office.

*Mor.* Oh, oh!

*Epi.* Sure he would do well enough, if he could sleep.

*Mor.* No, I should do well enough, if you could sleep. Have I no friend that will make her drunk, or give her a little laudanum, or opium?

*True.* Why, sir, she talks ten times worse in her sleep.

*Mor.* How!

*Cler.* Do you not know that, sir? never ceases all night.

*True.* And snores like a porpoise.

*Mor.* O redeem me, fate; redeem me, fate! For how many causes may a man be divorced, nephew?

*Daup.* I know not, truly, sir.

*True.* Some divine must resolve you in that, sir, or canon-lawyer.[1]

*Mor.* I will not rest, I will not think of any other hope or comfort, till I know. [*Exit with* Dauphine

*Cler.* Alas, poor man!

*True.* You'll make him mad indeed, ladies, if you pursue this.

*Hau.* No, we'll let him breathe now, a quarter of an hour or so.

*Cler.* By my faith, a large truce!

*Hau.* Is that his keeper, that is gone with him?

*Daw.* It is his nephew, madam.

*La-F.* Sir Dauphine Eugenie.

*Cen.* He looks like a very pitiful knight—

*Daw.* As can be. This marriage has put him out of all.

*La-F.* He has not a penny in his purse, madam.

*Daw.* He is ready to cry all this day.

*La-F.* A very shark; he set me in the nick t'other night at Primero.[2]

*True.* How these swabbers talk!

*Cler.* Ay, Otter's wine has swell'd their humours above a springtide.

*Hau.* Good Morose, let's go in again.

[*Exeunt* Lady Haughty, Lady Centaure, Mistress Mavis, Mistress Trusty, La-Foole *and* Daw

*Epi.* [*following them*]. I wait on you, madam.

*True.* [*stopping her*]. 'Slight, I will have them as silent as signs, and their post too, ere I have done. Do you hear, lady-bride? I pray thee now, as thou art a noble wench, continue this discourse of Dauphine within; but praise him exceedingly: magnify him with all the height of affection thou canst;—I have some purpose in't: and but beat off these two rooks, Jack Daw and his fellow, with any discontentment, hither, and I'll honour thee for ever.

*Epi.* I was about it here. It angered me to the soul, to hear them begin to talk so malépert.[3]

*True.* Pray thee perform it, and thou winn'st me an idolater to thee everlasting.

*Epi.* Will you go in and hear me do't?

*True.* No, I'll stay here. Drive them out of your company, 'tis all I ask; which cannot be any way better done, than by extolling Dauphine, whom they have so slighted.

---

[1] canon-lawyer: lawyer versed in ecclesiastical law.

[2] Primero: an old game of cards.

[3] malépert: malapert: impudently.

*Epi.* I warrant you; you shall expect one of them presently. [*Exit*

*Cler.* What a cast of kestrils[1] are these, to hawk after ladies, thus!

*True.* Ay, and strike at such an eagle as Dauphine.

*Cler.* He will be mad when we tell him. Here he comes.

*Re-enter* Dauphine

*Cler.* O sir, you are welcome.

*True.* Where's thine uncle?

*Daup.* Run out of doors in his night-caps, to talk with a casuist about his divorce. It works admirably.

*True.* Thou wouldst have said so, an thou hadst been here! The ladies have laugh'd at thee most comically, since thou went'st, Dauphine.

*Cler.* And ask'd, if thou wert thine uncle's keeper.

*True.* And the brace of baboons answer'd, Yes; and said thou wert a pitiful poor fellow, and didst live upon posts,[2] and hadst nothing but three suits of apparel, and some few benevolences that the lords gave thee to fool to them, and swagger.

*Daup.* Let me not live, I'll beat them: I'll bind them both to grand-madam's bed-posts, and have them baited with monkeys.

*True.* Thou shalt not need, they shall be beaten to thy hand, Dauphine. I have an execution to serve upon them, I warrant thee, shall serve; trust my plot.

*Daup.* Ay, you have many plots! so you had one to make all the wenches in love with me.

*True.* Why, if I do it not yet afore night, as near as 'tis, take the mortgage of my wit.

*Cler.* 'Fore God, I'll be his witness thou shalt have it, Dauphine: thou shalt be his fool for ever, if thou dost not.

*True.* Agreed. Perhaps 'twill be the better estate. Do you observe this gallery, or rather lobby, indeed? Here are a couple of studies, at each end one: here will I act such a tragi-comedy between the Guelphs and the Ghibellines,[3] Daw and La-Foole—which of them comes out first, will I seize on;—you two shall be the chorus behind the arras, and whip out between the acts and speak. —If I do not make them keep the peace for this remnant of the day, if not of the year, I have failed once——I hear Daw coming: hide, [*they withdraw*] and do not laugh, for God's sake.

*Re-enter* Daw

*Daw.* Which is the way into the garden, trow?

*True.* O, Jack Daw! I am glad I have met with you. In good faith, I must have this matter go no further between you: I must have it taken up.

*Daw.* What matter, sir? between whom?

*True.* Come, you disguise it: sir Amorous and you. If you love me, Jack, you shall make use of your philosophy now, for this once, and deliver me your sword. This is not the wedding the Centaurs were at,[4] though there be a she one here. [*Takes his sword.*] The bride has entreated me I will see no blood shed at her bridal: you saw her whisper me erewhile.

*Daw.* As I hope to finish Tacitus,[5] I intend no murder.

*True.* Do you not wait for sir Amorous?

*Daw.* Not I, by my knighthood.

*True.* And your scholarship too?

*Daw.* And my scholarship too.

*True.* Go to, then I return you your sword, and ask you mercy; but put it not up, for you will be assaulted. I understood that you had apprehended it, and walked here to brave him; and that you had held your life contemptible, in regard of your honour.

*Daw.* No, no; no such thing, I assure you. He and I parted now, as good friends as could be.

---

[1] **cast . . . kestrils:** couple of hawks,—a contemptuous term.

[2] **posts:** bets.

[3] **Guelphs, Ghibellines:** The rival political factions in Italy from the 12th to the 15th centuries.

[4] **this . . . at:** The Centaurs fought the Lapithae at the marriage of their king in an attempt to carry off the bride and the other women, but were defeated by the aid of Theseus.

[5] **As . . . Tacitus:** These were, of course, schoolboy actors.

*True.* Trust not you to that visor. I saw him since dinner with another face: I have known many men in my time vex'd with losses, with deaths, and with abuses; but so offended a wight as sir Amorous, did I never see or read of. For taking away his guests, sir, to-day, that's the cause; and he declares it behind your back with such threatenings and contempts——He said to Dauphine, you were the arrant'st ass—

*Daw.* Ay, he may say his pleasure.

*True.* And swears you are so protested a coward, that he knows you will never do him any manly or single right; and therefore he will take his course.

*Daw.* I'll give him any satisfaction, sir—but fighting.

*True.* Ay, sir: but who knows what satisfaction he'll take: blood he thirsts for, and blood he will have; and whereabouts on you he will have it, who knows but himself?

*Daw.* I pray you, master Truewit, be you a mediator.

*True.* Well, sir, conceal yourself then in this study till I return. [*Puts him into the study.*] Nay, you must be content to be lock'd in; for, for mine own reputation, I would not have you seen to receive a public disgrace, while I have the matter in managing. Ods so, here he comes; keep your breath close, that he do not hear you sigh.—In good faith, sir Amorous, he is not this way; I pray you be merciful, do not murder him; he is a Christian, as good as you: you are arm'd as if you sought revenge on all his race. Good Dauphine, get him away from this place. I never knew a man's choler so high, but he would speak to his friends, he would hear reason.—Jack Daw, Jack! asleep!

*Daw* [*within*]. Is he gone, master Truewit?

*True.* Ay; did you hear him?

*Daw.* O lord! yes.

*True.* What a quick ear fear has!

*Daw* [*comes out of the closet*]. But is he so arm'd, as you say?

*True.* Arm'd! did you ever see a fellow set out to take possession?[1]

*Daw.* Ay, sir.

*True.* That may give you some light to conceive of him; but 'tis nothing to the principal. Some false brother in the house has furnish'd him strangely; or, if it were out of the house, it was Tom Otter.

*Daw.* Indeed he's a captain, and his wife is his kinswoman.

*True.* He has got some body's old two-hand sword, to mow you off at the knees; and that sword hath spawn'd such a dagger!—But then he is so hung with pikes, halberds, petronels, calivers and muskets, that he looks like a justice of peace's hall; a man of two thousand a-year is not cess'd[2] at so many weapons as he has on. There was never fencer challenged at so many several foils. You would think he meant to murder all St. Pulchre parish.[3] If he could but victual himself for half a-year in his breeches,[4] he is sufficiently arm'd to over-run a country.

*Daw.* Good lord! what means he, sir? I pray you, master Truewit, be you a mediator.

*True.* Well, I'll try if he will be appeased with a leg or an arm; if not you must die once.

*Daw.* I would be loth to lose my right arm, for writing madrigals.

*True.* Why, if he will be satisfied with a thumb or a little finger, all's one to me. You must think, I'll do my best. *Shuts him up again.*

*Daw.* Good sir, do.

CLERIMONT *and* DAUPHINE *come forward*

*Cler.* What hast thou done?

*True.* He will let me do nothing, he does all afore; he offers his left arm.

*Cler.* His left wing for a Jack Daw.

*Daup.* Take it by all means.

*True.* How! maim a man for ever, for a jest? What a conscience hast thou!

*Daup.* 'Tis no loss to him; he has no employment for his arms, but to eat spoon-meat. Beside, as good maim his body as his reputation.

---

[1] set . . . possession: When estates were litigated or transferred, the new owner often set forth with his attendants well armed, to take possession.

[2] cess'd: assessed, taxed.

[3] St. Pulchre parish: St. Sepulchre, a disreputable part of London.

[4] if . . . breeches:

> "With a huge pair of round-trunk hose,
> In which he carried as much meat
> As he and all his knights could eat."
> —Butler's *Hudibras.*

*True.* He is a scholar and a wit, and yet he does not think so. But he loses no reputation with us; for we all resolved him an ass before. To your places again.

*Cler.* I pray thee, let me be in at the other a little.

*True.* Look, you'll spoil all; these be ever your tricks.

*Cler.* No, but I could hit of some things that thou wilt miss, and thou wilt say are good ones.

*True.* I warrant you. I pray forbear, I'll leave it off, else.

*Daup.* Come away, Clerimont.

[Dauphine *and* Clerimont *withdraw as before*

*Enter* La-Foole

*True.* Sir Amorous!

*La-F.* Master Truewit.

*True.* Whither were you going?

*La-F.* Down into the court.

*True.* By no means, sir.

*La-F.* Why, sir?

*True.* [*opening the door of the other study*]. Enter here, if you love your life.

*La-F.* Why? why?

*True.* Question till your throat be cut, do: dally till the enraged soul find you.

*La-F.* Who is that?

*True.* Daw it is: will you in?

*La-F.* Ay, ay, I'll in: what's the matter?

*True.* Nay, if he had been cool enough to tell us that, there had been some hope to atone[1] you; but he seems so implacably enraged!

*La-F.* 'Slight, let him rage! I'll hide myself.

*True.* Do, good sir. But what have you done to him within, that should provoke him thus? You have broke some jest upon him afore the ladies.

*La-F.* Not I, never in my life, broke jest upon any man. The bride was praising sir Dauphine, and he went away in snuff,[2] and I followed him; unless he took offence at me in his drink erewhile, that I would not pledge all the horse full.

*True.* By my faith, and that may be; you remember well: but he walks the round up and down, through every room o' the house, with a towel in his hand, crying, *Where's La-Foole? Who saw La-Foole?* And when Dauphine and I demanded the cause, we can force no answer from him, but—*O revenge, how sweet art thou! I will strangle him in this towel*—which leads us to conjecture that the main cause of his fury is, for bringing your meat to-day, with a towel about you, to his discredit.

*La-F.* Like enough. Why, an he be angry for that, I'll stay here till his anger be blown over.

*True.* A good becoming resolution, sir; if you can put it on o' the sudden.

*La-F.* Yes, I can put it on: or, I'll away into the country presently.

*True.* How will you go out of the house, sir? he knows you are in the house, and he'll watch this se'ennight, but he'll have you: he'll outwait a sergeant for you.

*La-F.* Why, then I'll stay here.

*True.* You must think how to victual yourself in time then.

*La-F.* Why, sweet master Truewit, will you entreat my cousin Otter to send me a cold venison pasty, a bottle or two of wine; and a pallat[3] to lie on?

*True.* O, I would not advise you to sleep by any means.

*La-F.* Would you not, sir? Why, then I will not.

*True.* Yet, there's another fear—

*La-F.* Is there! what is't?

*True.* No, he cannot break open this door with his foot, sure.

*La-F.* I'll set my back against it, sir. I have a good back.

*True.* But then if he should batter.

*La-F.* Batter! if he dare, I'll have an action of battery against him.

*True.* Cast you[4] the worst. He has sent for powder already, and what he will do with it, no man knows: perhaps blow up the corner of the house where he suspects you are. Here he comes; in quickly. [*Thrusts in* La-Foole *and shuts the door.*]—I protest, sir John Daw, he is not this way: what will you do? Before God, you shall hang no petard[1] here: I'll die rather. Will you not take my word? I never knew one but would be satisfied.—Sir Amorous [*speaks through the key-hole*], there's no standing out: he has made a petard of an old brass pot, to force your door. Think upon some satisfaction, or terms to offer him.

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[1] **atone:** to reconcile (to make you at one).
[2] **snuff:** in resentment; in a huff.
[3] **pallat:** pallet, a straw mattress.
[4] **cast you:** forecast, expect.

*La-F.* [*within.*] Sir, I'll give him any satisfaction: I dare give any terms.

*True.* You'll leave it to me then?

*La-F.* Ay, sir: I'll stand to any conditions.

*True.* [*beckoning forward* Clerimont *and* Dauphine.] How now, what think you, sirs? were't not a difficult thing to determine which of these two fear'd most?

*Cler.* Yes, but this fears the bravest: the other a whiniling[2] dastard, Jack Daw! But La-Foole, a brave heroic coward! and is afraid in a great look and a stout accent; I like him rarely.

*True.* Had it not been pity these two should have been concealed?

*Cler.* Shall I make a motion?

*True.* Briefly: for I must strike while 'tis hot.

*Cler.* Shall I go fetch the ladies to the catastrophe?

*True.* Umph! ay, by my troth.

*Daup.* By no mortal means. Let them continue in the state of ignorance, and err still; think them wits and fine fellows, as they have done. 'Twere sin to reform them.

*True.* Well, I will have them fetch'd, now I think on't, for a private purpose of mine: do, Clerimont, fetch them, and discourse to them all that's past, and bring them into the gallery here.

*Daup.* This is thy extreme vanity, now: thou think'st thou wert undone, if every jest thou mak'st were not published.

*True.* Thou shalt see how unjust thou art presently. Clerimont, say it was Dauphine's plot. [*Exit* Clerimont] Trust me not, if the whole drift be not for thy good. There is a carpet[3] in the next room, put it on, with this scarf over thy face, and a cushion on thy head, and be ready when I call Amorous. Away! [*Exit* Dauphine] John Daw!

*Goes to* Daw's *closet and brings him out.*

*Daw.* What good news, sir?

*True.* Faith, I have followed and argued with him hard for you. I told him you were a knight, and a scholar, and that you knew fortitude did consist *magis patiendo quam faciendo, magis ferendo quam feriendo.*[4]

*Daw.* It doth so indeed, sir.

*True.* And that you would suffer, I told him: so at first he demanded by my troth, in my conceit, too much.

*Daw.* What was it, sir?

*True.* Your upper lip, and six of your fore-teeth.

*Daw.* 'Twas unreasonable.

*True.* Nay, I told him plainly, you could not spare them all. So after long argument *pro et con.* as you know, I brought him down to your two butter-teeth,[5] and them he would have.

*Daw.* O, did you so? Why, he shall have them.

*True.* But he shall not, sir, by your leave. The conclusion is this, sir: because you shall be very good friends hereafter, and this never to be remembered or upbraided; besides, that he may not boast he has done any such thing to you in his own person; he is to come here in disguise, give you five kicks in private, sir, take your sword from you, and lock you up in that study during pleasure: which will be but a little while, we'll get it released presently.

*Daw.* Five kicks! he shall have six, sir, to be friends.

*True.* Believe me, you shall not overshoot yourself, to send him that word by me.

*Daw.* Deliver it, sir; he shall have it with all my heart, to be friends.

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[1] **petard:** explosive.

[2] **whiniling:** whimling, a person given to whims.

[3] **carpet:** used as a table cover.

[4] **magis . . . feriendo:** "more in enduring than in doing; more in bearing than in striking."

[5] **butter-teeth:** two upper front teeth.

*True.* Friends! Nay, an he should not be so, and heartily too, upon these terms, he shall have me to enemy while I live. Come, sir, bear it bravely.

*Daw.* O lord, sir, 'tis nothing.

*True.* True: what's six kicks to a man that reads Seneca?

*Daw.* I have had a hundred, sir.

*True.* Sir Amorous!

*Re-enter* Dauphine, *disguised*

No speaking one to another, or rehearsing old matters.

*Daw* [*as* Dauphine *kicks him*]. One, two, three, four, five. I protest, sir Amorous, you shall have six.

*True.* Nay, I told you, you should not talk. Come give him six, an he will needs. [Dauphine *kicks him again.*]—Your sword. [*Takes his sword.*] Now return to your safe custody; you shall presently meet afore the ladies, and be the dearest friends one to another. [*Puts* Daw *into the study.*]—Give me the scarf now, thou shalt beat the other barefaced. Stand by: [Dauphine *retires, and* Truewit *goes to the other closet, and releases* La-Foole.] Sir Amorous!

*La-F.* What's here! A sword?

*True.* I cannot help it, without I should take the quarrel upon myself. Here he has sent you his sword—

*La-F.* I'll receive none on't.

*True.* And he wills you to fasten it against a wall, and break your head in some few several places against the hilts.

*La-F.* I will not: tell him roundly. I cannot endure to shed my own blood.

*True.* Will you not?

*La-F.* No. I'll beat it against a fair flat wall, if that will satisfy him: if not, he shall beat it himself, for Amorous.

*True.* Why, this is strange starting off, when a man undertakes for you! I offer'd him another condition; will you stand to that?

*La-F.* Ay, what is't?

*True.* That you will be beaten in private.

*La-F.* Yes, I am content, at the blunt.[1]

*Enter, above,* Haughty, Centaure, Mavis, Mistress Otter, Epicœne, *and* Trusty

*True.* Then you must submit yourself to be hoodwinked in this scarf, and be led to him, where he will take your sword from you, and make you bear a blow over the mouth, gules,[2] and tweaks by the nose *sans nombre.*[3]

*La-F.* I am content. But why must I be blinded?

*True.* That's for your good, sir; because, if he should grow insolent upon this, and publish it hereafter to your disgrace, (which I hope he will not do,) you might swear safely, and protest, he never beat you, to your knowledge.

*La-F.* O, I conceive.

*True.* I do not doubt but you'll be perfect good friends upon't, and not dare to utter an ill thought one of another in future.

*La-F.* Not I, as God help me, of him.

*True.* Nor he of you, sir. If he should, [*Binds his eyes.*]—Come, sir. [*Leads him forward.*]—*All hid,* sir John!

*Enter* Dauphine, *and tweaks him by the nose*

*La-F.* O, sir John, sir John! Oh, o-o-o-o-o-Oh—

*True.* Good sir John, leave tweaking, you'll blow his nose off.— 'Tis sir John's pleasure, you should retire into the study. [*Puts him up again.*]—Why, now you are friends. All bitterness between you, I hope, is buried; you shall come forth by and by, Damon and Pythias[4] upon't, and embrace with all the rankness of friendship that can be.—I trust, we shall have them tamer in their language hereafter. Dauphine, I worship thee.—God's will, the ladies have surprised us!

*Enter* Haughty, Centaure, Mavis, Mistress Otter, Epicœne, *and* Trusty, *behind*

*Hau.* Centaure, how our judgments were imposed on by these adulterate knights!

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[1] blunt: with the flat side of the sword.

[2] gules: throat.

[3] sans nombre: without number.

[4] Damon and Pythias: famous friends in Greek history.

*Cen.* Nay, madam, Mavis was more deceived than we; 'twas her commendation utter'd[1] them in the college.

*Mav.* I commended but their wits, madam, and their braveries. I never look'd toward their valours.

*Hau.* Sir Dauphine is valiant, and a wit too, it seems.

*Mav.* And a bravery[2] too.

*Hau.* Was this his project?

*Mrs. Ott.* So master Clerimont intimates, madam.

*Hau.* Good Morose, when you come to the college, will you bring him with you? he seems a very perfect gentleman.

*Epi.* He is so, madam, believe it.

*Cen.* But when will you come, Morose?

*Epi.* Three or four days hence, madam, when I have got me a coach and horses.

*Hau.* No, to-morrow, good Morose; Centaure shall send you her coach.

*Mav.* Yes faith, do, and bring sir Dauphine with you.

*Hau.* She has promised that, Mavis.

*Mav.* He is a very worthy gentleman in his exteriors, madam.

*Hau.* Ay, he shews he is judicial in his clothes.

*Cen.* And yet not so superlatively neat as some, madam, that have their faces set in a brake.[3]

*Hau.* Ay, and have every hair in form.

*Mav.* That wear purer linen than ourselves, and profess more neatness than the French!

*Epi.* Ay, ladies, they, what they tell one of us, have told a thousand; and are the only thieves of our fame, but think to take us with that perfume, or with that lace, and laugh at us unconscionably when they have done.

*Hau.* But sir Dauphine's carelessness becomes him.

*Cen.* I could love a man for such a nose.

*Mav.* Or such a leg.

*Cen.* He has an exceeding good eye, madam.

*Mav.* And a very good lock.[4]

*Mrs. Ott.* Please your honours to meet at my house, madam.

*True.* See how they eye thee, man! they are taken, I warrant thee.

HAUGHTY *comes forward*

*Hau.* You have unbraced our brace of knights here, master Truewit.

*True.* Not I, madam; it was sir Dauphine's ingine:[5] who, if he have disfurnish'd your ladyship of any guard or service by it, is able to make the place good again in himself.

*Hau.* There is no suspicion of that, sir.

*Cen.* God so, Mavis, Haughty is kissing.

*Mav.* Let us go too, and take part.

*They come forward*

*Hau.* But I am glad of the fortune (beside the discovery of two such empty caskets) to gain the knowledge of so rich a mine of virtue as sir Dauphine.

*Cen.* We would be all glad to style him of our friendship, and see him at the college.

*Mav.* He cannot mix with a sweeter society, I'll prophesy; and I hope he himself will think so.

*Daup.* I should be rude to imagine otherwise, lady.

*True.* Did not I tell thee, Dauphine! Why, all their actions are governed by crude opinion, without reason or cause; they know not why they do any thing; but, as they are inform'd, believe, judge, praise, condemn, love, hate, and in emulation one of another, do all these things alike. Only they have a natural inclination sways them generally to the worst, when they are left to themselves. But pursue it, now thou hast them.

*Hau.* Shall we go in again, Morose?

*Epi.* Yes, madam.

*Cen.* We'll entreat sir Dauphine's company.

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[1] utter'd: got them by.

[2] bravery: a fine gentleman; a beau.

[3] brake: frame used to make young horses carry their heads steady.

[4] lock: a favorite lock of hair, often tied with ribbons or rosettes.

[5] ingine: ingenious device.

*True.* Stay, good madam, the interview of the two friends, Pylades and Orestes:[1] I'll fetch them out to you straight.

*Hau.* Will you, master Truewit?

*Daup.* Ay, but noble ladies, do not confess in your countenance, or outward bearing to them, any discovery of their follies, that we may see how they will bear up again, with what assurance and erection.

*Hau.* We will not, sir Dauphine.

*Cen. Mav.* Upon our honours, sir Dauphine.

*True.* [*goes to the first closet*]. Sir Amorous, sir Amorous! The ladies are here.

*La-F.* [*within*]. Are they?

*True.* Yes; but slip out by and by, as their backs are turn'd, and meet sir John here, as by chance, when I call you. [*Goes to the other.*]—Jack Daw.

*Daw* [*within*]. What say you, sir?

*True.* Whip out behind me suddenly, and no anger in your looks to your adversary. Now, now!

La-Foole *and* Daw *slip out of their respective closets, and salute each other.*

*La-F.* Noble sir John Daw, where have you been?

*Daw.* To seek you, sir Amorous.

*La-F.* Me! I honour you.

*Daw.* I prevent you, sir.

*Cler.* They have forgot their rapiers.

*True.* O, they meet in peace, man.

*Daup.* Where's your sword, sir John?

*Cler.* And yours, sir Amorous?

*Daw.* Mine! my boy had it forth to mend the handle, e'en now.

*La-F.* And my gold handle was broke too, and my boy had it forth.

*Daup.* Indeed, sir!—How their excuses meet!

*Cler.* What a consent there is in the handles!

*True.* Nay, there is so in the points too, I warrant you.

*Enter* Morose, *with the two swords, drawn in his hands*

*Mrs. Ott.* O me! madam, he comes again, the madman! Away!

[Ladies, Daw, *and* La-Foole *run off*

*Mor.* What make these naked weapons here, gentlemen?

*True.* O sir! here hath like to have been murder since you went; a couple of knights fallen out about the bride's favour! We were fain to take away their weapons; your house had been begg'd[2] by this time else.

*Mor.* For what?

*Cler.* For manslaughter, sir, as being accessory.

*Mor.* And for her favours?

*True.* Ay, sir, heretofore, not present. —Clerimont, carry them their swords now. They have done all the hurt they will do.

[*Exit* Clerimont *with the two swords*

*Daup.* Have you spoke with the lawyer, sir?

*Mor.* O no! there is such a noise in the court, that they have frighted me home with more violence than I went! such speaking and counter-speaking, with their several voices of citations, appellations, allegations, certificates, attachments, interrogatories, references, convictions, and afflictions indeed, among the doctors and proctors, that the noise here is silence to't, a kind of calm midnight!

*True.* Why, sir, if you would be resolved indeed, I can bring you hither a very sufficient lawyer, and a learned divine, that shall enquire into every least scruple for you.

*Mor.* Can you, master Truewit?

*True.* Yes, and are very sober, grave persons, that will dispatch it in a chamber, with a whisper or two.

*Mor.* Good sir, shall I hope this benefit from you, and trust myself into your hands?

*True.* Alas, sir! your nephew and I have been ashamed and oft-times mad, since you went, to think how you are abused. Go in, good sir, and lock yourself up till we call you; we'll tell you more anon, sir.

*Mor.* Do your pleasure with me, gentlemen; I believe in you, and that deserves no delusion. [*Exit*

*True.* You shall find none, sir;—but heap'd, heap'd plenty of vexation.

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[1] **Pylades and Orestes:** famous friends in Greek myth.

[2] **begg'd:** forfeited to the crown.

*Daup.* What wilt thou do now, Wit?

*True.* Recover me hither Otter and the barber, if you can, by any means, presently.

*Daup.* Why? to what purpose?

*True.* O, I'll make the deepest divine, and gravest lawyer, out of them two for him—

*Daup.* Thou canst not, man; these are waking dreams.

*True.* Do not fear me. Clap but a civil gown with a welt[1] on the one, and a canonical cloak with sleeves on the other, and give them a few terms in their mouths, if there come not forth as able a doctor and complete a parson, for this turn, as may be wish'd, trust not my election: and I hope, without wronging the dignity of either profession, since they are but persons put on, and for mirth's sake, to torment him. The barber smatters Latin, I remember.

*Daup.* Yes, and Otter too.

*True.* Well then, if I make them not wrangle out this case to his no comfort, let me be thought a Jack Daw or La-Foole or anything worse. Go you to your ladies, but first send for them.

*Daup.* I will. [*Exeunt*

## ACT V

### SCENE I

*A Room in Morose's House*

*Enter* LA-FOOLE, CLERIMONT, *and* DAW

*La-F.* Where had you our swords, master Clerimont?

*Cler.* Why, Dauphine took them from the madman.

*La-F.* And he took them from our boys, I warrant you.

*Cler.* Very like, sir.

*La-F.* Thank you, good master Clerimont. Sir John Daw and I are both beholden to you.

*Cler.* Would I knew how to make you so, gentlemen!

*Daw.* Sir Amorous and I are your servants, sir.

*Enter* MAVIS

*Mav.* Gentlemen, have any of you a pen and ink? I would fain write out a riddle in Italian, for sir Dauphine to translate.

*Cler.* Not I, in troth, lady; I am no scrivener.

*Daw.* I can furnish you, I think, lady. [*Exeunt* DAW *and* MAVIS

*Cler.* He has it in the haft of a knife, I believe.

*La-F.* No, he has his box of instruments.

*Cler.* Like a surgeon!

*La-F.* For the mathematics: his square, his compasses, his brass pens, and black-lead, to draw maps of every place and person where he comes.

*Cler.* How, maps of persons!

*La-F.* Yes, sir, of Nomentack when he was here,[2] and of the prince of Moldavia, and of his mistress, mistress Epicœne.

*Re-enter* DAW

*Cler.* Away! he hath not found out her latitude, I hope.

*La-F.* You are a pleasant gentleman, sir.

*Cler.* Faith, now we are in private, let's wanton it a little, and talk waggishly.—Sir John, I am telling sir Amorous here, that you two govern the ladies wherever you come; you carry the feminine gender afore you.

*Daw.* They shall rather carry us afore them, if they will, sir.

*Cler.* Nay, I believe that they do, withal—but that you are the prime men in their affections, and direct all their actions—

*Daw.* Not I; sir Amorous is.

*La-F.* I protest, sir John is.

*Daw.* As I hope to rise in the state, sir Amorous, you have the person.

*La-F.* Sir John, you have the person, and the discourse too.

*Daw.* Not I, sir. I have no discourse—and then you have activity beside.

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[1] welt: border.

[2] Nomentack . . . here: An Indian chief brought to London from Virginia in Jonson's time.

*La-F.* I protest, sir John, you come as high from Tripoly as I do[1], every whit: and lift as many join'd stools, and leap over them, if you would use it.

*Cler.* Well, agree on't together, knights; for between you, you divide the kingdom or commonwealth of ladies' affections: I see it, and can perceive a little how they observe you, and fear you, indeed. Speak softly; here comes Dauphine, with the lady Haughty: he'll get the ladies from you, sirs, if you look not to him in time.

*La-F.* Why, if he do, we'll fetch them nome again, I warrant you.

[*Exit with* Daw. Clerimont *walks aside*

*Enter* Dauphine *and* Haughty

*Hau.* I assure you, sir Dauphine, it is the price and estimation of your virtue only, that hath embark'd me to this adventure; and I could not but make out to tell you so: nor can I repent me of the act, since it is always an argument of some virtue in our selves, that we love and affect it so in others.

*Daup.* Your ladyship sets too high a price on my weakness.

*Hau.* Sir, I can distinguish gems from pebbles—

*Daup.* [*aside*]. Are you so skilful in stones?

*Hau.* And howsoever I may suffer in such a judgment as yours, by admitting equality of rank or society with Centaure or Mavis—

*Daup.* You do not, madam; I perceive they are your mere foils.

*Hau.* Then, are you a friend to truth, sir; it makes me love you the more. It is not the outward, but the inward man that I affect. They are not apprehensive of an eminent perfection, but love flat and dully.

*Cen.* [*within*]. Where are you, my lady Haughty?

*Hau.* I come presently, Centaure.—My chamber, sir, my page shall shew you; and Trusty, my woman, shall be ever awake for you: you need not fear to communicate any thing with her, for she is a Fidelia. I pray you wear this jewel for my sake, sir Dauphine—

*Enter* Centaure

Where's Mavis, Centaure?

*Cen.* Within, madam, a writing. I'll follow you presently: [*Exit* Haughty.] I'll but speak a word with sir Dauphine.

*Daup.* With me, madam?

*Cen.* Good sir Dauphine, do not trust Haughty, nor make any credit to her[2] whatever you do besides. Sir Dauphine, I give you this caution, she is a perfect courtier, and loves nobody but for her uses; and she's above fifty too, and pargets![3] See her in a forenoon. Here comes Mavis, a worse face than she! you would not like this by candle-light.

*Re-enter* Mavis

If you'll come to my chamber one o' these mornings early, or late in an evening, I'll tell you more. Where's Haughty, Mavis?

*Mav.* Within, Centaure. [*Exeunt*

*Cler.* [*coming forward*]. How now, Dauphine! how dost thou quit thyself of these females?

*Daup.* 'Slight, they haunt me like fairies, and give me jewels here; I cannot be rid of them.

*Cler.* O, you must not tell though.[4]

*Daup.* Mass, I forgot that: I was never so assaulted. One loves for virtue, and bribes me with this; [*shews the jewel.*]—another loves me with caution: and all are jealous, and rail each at other.

*Enter* Truewit

*True.* O, are you here? Come, Dauphine; go call your uncle presently: I have fitted my divine and my canonist, dyed their beards and all. The knaves do not know themselves, they are so exalted and altered. Preferment changes any man. Thou shalt keep one door and I another, and then Clerimont in the midst, that he may have no means of escape from their cavilling, when they grow hot once again. And then the women, as I have given the bride her instructions, to break in upon him in the l'envoy.[1] O, 'twill be full and twanging! Away! fetch him. [*Exit* Dauphine

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[1] you . . . do: are as agile as I am.

[2] nor . . . her: nor give her any credit.

[3] pargets: paints and plasters her face.

[4] you . . . though: If you told the secrets of fairies, misfortune came upon you.

*Enter* Otter *disguised as a divine, and* Cutbeard *as a canon lawyer*

Come, master doctor, and master parson, look to your parts now, and discharge them bravely; you are well set forth, perform it as well. If you chance to be out, do not confess it with standing still, or humming, or gaping one at another; but go on, and talk aloud and eagerly; use vehement action, and only remember your terms, and you are safe. Let the matter go where it will: you have many will do so. But at first be very solemn and grave, like your garments, though you loose your selves after, and skip out like a brace of jugglers on a table. Here he comes: set your faces, and look superciliously, while I present you.

*Re-enter* Dauphine *with* Morose

*Mor.* Are these the two learned men?

*True.* Yes, sir; please you salute them.

*Mor.* Salute them! I had rather do anything, than wear out time so unfruitfully, sir. I wonder how these common forms, as *God save you*, and *You are welcome*, are come to be a habit in our lives: or, *I am glad to see you!* when I cannot see what the profit can be of these words, so long as it is no whit better with him whose affairs are sad and grievous, that he hears this salutation.

*True.* 'Tis true, sir; we'll go to the matter then.—Gentlemen, master doctor, and master parson, I have acquainted you sufficiently with the business for which you are come hither; and you are not now to inform yourselves in the state of the question, I know. This is the gentleman who expects your resolution, and therefore, when you please, begin.

*Ott.* Please you, master doctor.

*Cut.* Please you, good master parson.

*Ott.* I would hear the canon-law speak first.

*Cut.* It must give place to positive divinity, sir.

*Mor.* Nay, good gentlemen, do not throw me into circumstances.[2] Let your comforts arrive quickly at me, those that are. Be swift in affording me my peace, if so I shall hope any. I love not your disputations, or your court-tumults. And that it be not strange to you, I will tell you: My father, in my education, was wont to advise me, that I should always collect and contain my mind, not suffering it to flow loosely; that I should look to what things were necessary to the carriage of my life, and what not; embracing the one and eschewing the other: in short, that I should endear myself to rest, and avoid turmoil; which now is grown to be another nature to me. So that I come not to your public pleadings, or your places of noise; not that I neglect those things that make for the dignity of the commonwealth; but for the mere avoiding of clamours and impertinences of orators, that know not how to be silent. And for the cause of noise, am I now a suitor to you. You do not know in what a misery I have been exercised this day, what a torrent of evil! my very house turns round with the tumult! I dwell in a windmill: the perpetual motion is here, and not at Eltham.[3]

*True.* Well, good master doctor, will you break the ice? master parson will wade after.

*Cut.* Sir, though unworthy, and the weaker, I will presume.

*Ott.* 'Tis no presumption, *domine* doctor.

*Mor.* Yet again!

*Cut.* Your question is, For how many causes a man may have *divortium legitimum*, a lawful divorce? First, you must understand the nature of the word, divorce, *à divertendo*—

*Mor.* No excursions upon words, good doctor; to the question briefly.

*Cut.* I answer then, the canon law affords divorce but in few cases. But there are *impedimenta*, impediments, as we call them, all which do not *dirimere contractum*, but *irritum reddere matrimonium*, as we say in the canon law, *not take away the bond, but cause a nullity therein.*

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[1] in . . . l'envoy: in the conclusion.

[2] do . . . circumstances: do not beat about the bush.

[3] Eltham: There was a famous puppet show in Eltham in Jonson's time.

*Mor.* I understood you before: good sir, avoid your impertinency of translation.

*Ott.* He cannot open this too much, sir, by your favour.

*Mor.* Yet more!

*True.* O, you must give the learned men leave, sir.—To your impediments, master doctor.

*Cut.* The first is *impedimentum erroris.*

*Ott.* Of which there are several species.

*Cut.* Ay, as *error personæ.*

*Ott.* If you contract yourself to one person, thinking of another.

*Cut.* Then, *error fortunæ.*

*Ott.* If she is a beggar, and you thought her rich.

*Cut.* Then, *error qualitatis.*

*Ott.* If she prove stubborn or headstrong, that you thought obedient.

*Mor.* How! is that, sir, a lawful impediment? One at once, I pray you, gentlemen.

*Cut.* Master parson says right. *Nec post nuptiarum benedictionem.* It doth indeed but *irrita reddere sponsalia*, annul the contract; after marriage it is of no obstancy.

*True.* Alas, sir, what a hope are we fallen from by this time!

*Cut.* The next is *conditio:* if you thought her free born, and she prove a bond-woman, there is impediment of estate and condition.

*Ott.* Ay, but, master doctor, those servitudes are *sublatæ*[1] now, among us Christians.

*Cut.* By your favour, master parson—

*Ott.* You shall give me leave, master doctor.

*Mor.* Nay, gentlemen, quarrel not in that question; it concerns not my case: pass to the third.

*Cut.* Well then, the third is *votum:* if either party have made a vow of chastity. But that practice, as master parson said of the other, is taken away among us, thanks be to discipline.[2] The fourth is *cognatio;* if the persons be of kin within the degrees.

*Ott.* Ay: do you know what the degrees are, sir?

*Mor.* No, nor I care not, sir; they offer me no comfort in the question, I am sure.

*Cut.* But there is a branch of this impediment may, which is *cognatio spiritualis:* if you were her godfather, sir, then the marriage is incestuous.

*Ott.* That comment is absurd and superstitious, master doctor: I cannot endure it. Are we not all brothers and sisters, and as much akin in that, as godfathers and god-daughters?

*Mor.* O me! to end the controversy, I never was a godfather, I never was a godfather in my life, sir. Pass to the next.

*Cut.* The fifth is *crimen adulterii;* the known case. The sixth, *cultus disparitas*, difference of religion: Have you ever examined her, what religion she is of?

*Mor.* No, I would rather she were of none, than be put to the trouble of it.

*Ott.* You may have it done for you, sir.

*Mor.* By no means, good sir; on to the rest: shall you ever come to an end, think you?

*True.* Yes, he has done half, sir. On to the rest.—Be patient, and expect, sir.

*Cut.* The seventh is, *vis:* if it were upon compulsion or force.

*Mor.* O no, it was too voluntary, mine; too voluntary.

*Cut.* The eighth is, *ordo;* if ever she have taken holy orders.

*Ott.* That's superstitious too.

*Mor.* No matter, master parson; Would she would go into a nunnery yet.

*Cut.* The ninth is, *ligamen;* if you were bound, sir, to any other before.

*Mor.* I thrust myself too soon into these fetters. I feel no air of comfort blowing to me, in all this.

*True.* Hey-day, now they begin!

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[1] **sublatæ:** no longer exist.

[2] **discipline:** The Reformation of the Church.

*Mor.* What's all this to me?

*Cler.* Now it grows warm.

*Ott.* Ay, or if there be *morbus perpetuus, et insanabilis;* as *paralysis, elephantiasis,* or so—

*Cut.* I conceive you, sir.

*Cler.* Before he speaks!

*True.* Nay, good sir, attend the learned men; they'll think you neglect them else.

*Daup.* They dispute it very learnedly, i'faith.

*Mor.* Good sir, let me escape.

*True.* Nay, hear the conclusion, sir.

*Mor.* Good echoes, forbear.

EPICŒNE *rushes in, followed by* HAUGHTY, CENTAURE, MAVIS, MISTRESS OTTER, DAW, *and* LA-FOOLE

*Epi.* I will not endure it any longer. Ladies, I beseech you, help me. This is such a wrong as never was offered to poor bride before: upon her marriage-day to have her husband conspire against her, and a couple of mercenary companions to be brought in for form's sake, to persuade a separation! If you had blood or virtue in you, gentlemen, you would not suffer such earwigs about a husband, or scorpions to creep between man and wife.

*Mor.* O the variety and changes of my torment!

*Hau.* Let them be cudgell'd out of doors by our grooms.

*Cen.* I'll lend you my footman.

*Mav.* We'll have our men blanket them in the hall.

*Mrs. Ott.* As there was one at our house, madam, for peeping in at the door.

*Daw.* Content, i'faith.

*True.* Stay, ladies and gentlemen; you'll hear before you proceed?

*Mav.* I'd have the bridegroom blanketed too.

*Cen.* Begin with him first.

*Hau.* Yes, by my troth.

*Mor.* O mankind generation!

*Daup.* Ladies, for my sake forbear.

*Hau.* Yes, for sir Dauphine's sake.

*Cen.* He shall command us.

*La-F.* He is as fine a gentleman of his inches, madam, as any is about the town, and wears as good colours when he lists.[1]

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*Mor.* O my heart! wilt thou break? wilt thou break? this is worst of all worst worsts that hell could have devised!

*Daup.* Come, I see now plain confederacy in this doctor and this parson, to abuse a gentleman. You study his affliction. I pray be gone, companions. —And, gentlemen, I begin to suspect you for having parts with them.—Sir, will it please you hear me?

*Mor.* O do not talk to me; take not from me the pleasure of dying in silence, nephew.

*Daup.* Sir, I must speak to you. I have been long your poor despised kinsman, and many a hard thought has strengthened you against me: but now it shall appear if either I love you or your peace, and prefer them to all the world beside. I will not be long or grievous to you, sir. If I free you of this unhappy match absolutely, and instantly, after all this trouble, and almost in your despair, now—

*Mor.* It cannot be.

*Daup.* Sir, that you be never troubled with a murmur of it more, what shall I hope for, or deserve of you?

*Mor.* O, what thou wilt, nephew! thou shalt deserve me, and have me.

*Daup.* Shall I have your favour perfect to me, and love hereafter?

*Mor.* That, and any thing beside. Make thine own conditions. My whole estate is thine; manage it, I will become thy ward.

*Daup.* Nay, sir, I will not be so unreasonable.

*Epi.* Will sir Dauphine be mine enemy too?

*Daup.* You know I have been long a suitor to you, uncle, that out of your estate, which is fifteen hundred a-year, you would allow me but five hundred during life, and assure the rest upon me after; to which I have often, by myself and friends, tendered you a writing to sign, which you would never consent or incline to. If you please but to effect it now—

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[1] The two impostors carry on a vociferous argument in Latin terms. *Editor's note.*

*Mor.* Thou shalt have it, nephew: I will do it, and more.

*Daup.* If I quit you not presently, and for ever, of this cumber, you shall have power instantly, afore all these, to revoke your act, and I will become whose slave you will give me to, for ever.

*Mor.* Where is the writing? I will seal to it, that, or to a blank, and write thine own conditions.

*Epi.* O me, most unfortunate, wretched gentlewoman!

*Hau.* Will sir Dauphine do this?

*Epi.* Good sir, have some compassion on me.

*Mor.* O, my nephew knows you, belike; away, crocodile!

*Cen.* He does it not sure without good ground.

*Daup.* Here, sir.

*Gives him the parchments.*

*Mor.* Come, nephew, give me the pen; I will subscribe to any thing, and seal to what thou wilt, for my deliverance. Thou art my restorer. Here, I deliver it thee as my deed. If there be a word in it lacking, or writ with false orthography, I protest before [heaven] I will not take the advantage.

*Returns the writings.*

*Daup.* Then here is your release, sir. [*Takes off* Epicœne's *peruke and other disguises.*] You have married a boy, a gentleman's son, that I have brought up this half year at my great charges, and for this composition,[1] which I have now made with you.—What say you, master doctor? This is *justum impedimentum,* I hope, *error personœ?*[2]

*Ott.* Yes, sir, *in primo gradu.*[3]

*Cut. In primo gradu.*

*Daup.* I thank you, good doctor Cutbeard, and parson Otter. [*Pulls their false beards and gowns off.*] You are beholden to them, sir, that have taken this pains for you; and my friend, master Truewit, who enabled[4] them for the business. Now you may go in and rest; be as private as you will, sir. [*Exit* Morose.] I'll not trouble you, till you trouble me with your funeral, which I care not how soon it come.—Cutbeard, I'll make your lease good.[5] *Thank me not, but with your leg, Cutbeard.* And Tom Otter, your princess shall be reconciled to you.—How now, gentlemen, do you look at me?

*Cler.* A boy!

*Daup.* Yes, mistress Epicœne.

*True.* Well, Dauphine, you have lurch'd[6] your friends of the better half of the garland, by concealing this part of the plot: but much good do it thee, thou deserv'st it, lad. And, Clerimont, for thy unexpected bringing these two to confession, wear my part of it freely. Nay, sir Daw and sir La-Foole, you see the gentlewoman that has done you the favours! we are all thankful to you, and so should the woman-kind here, I am sure. But that we have stuck it upon you to-day, in your own imagined persons, and so lately, this Amazon, the champion of the sex, should beat you now thriftily, for the common slanders which ladies receive from such cuckoos as you are. You are they that will lie with their reputations, and make their fame suffer. Away, you common moths of these, and all ladies' honours. Go, travel to make legs and faces, and come home with some new matter to be laugh'd at; you deserve to live in an air as corrupted as that wherewith you feed rumour. [*Exeunt* Daw *and* La-Foole.] —Madams, you are mute, upon this new metamorphosis! But here stands she that has vindicated your fames. Take heed of such insectæ hereafter. And let it not trouble you, that you have discovered any mysteries to this young gentleman, we'll all undertake for his secrecy, that can speak so well of his silence. [*Coming forward.*]—*Spectators, if you like this comedy, rise cheerfully, and now Morose is gone in, clap your hands. It may be, that noise will cure him, at least please him.*

[*Exeunt*

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[1] **composition:** contract.

[2] **justum . . . personæ:** just impediment; a mistake in the person.

[3] **in . . . gradu:** of the first degree.

[4] **enabled:** prepared; coached.

[5] **lease good:** see Act II, Sc. IV, line 20, (page 268).

[6] **lurch'd:** robbed.

### READING LIST

*The Man Who Married a Dumb Wife* (1915), Anatole France
*The Alchemist,* Ben Jonson
*Every Man in His Humour,* Ben Jonson
*Bartholomew Fair,* Ben Jonson
*Volpone,* Ben Jonson
*The Sad Shepherd,* Ben Jonson
*Cynthia's Revels,* Ben Jonson
*The Masque of Beauty,* Ben Jonson
*The Masque of Queens,* Ben Jonson
*Saint Louis, A Civic Masque* (1914), Percy Mackaye
*Caliban by the Yellow Sands* (1916), Percy Mackaye
*Philaster; or Love Lies A-Bleeding,* Francis Beaumont (1585–1616) and John Fletcher (1579–1625)
*The Knight of the Burning Pestle,* Beaumont and Fletcher
*The Duchess of Malfi,* John Webster (1602–1624)
*Bussy d'Ambois,* George Chapman (1559–1634)
*The Shoemaker's Holiday,* Thomas Dekker (1570?–1641?)
*Westward Ho!,* Dekker and Webster
*A New Way to Pay Old Debts,* Philip Massinger (1583–1640)
*A Woman Killed with Kindness,* Thomas Heywood (died c. 1650)
*The Broken Heart,* John Ford (1586–1640)
*Samson Agonistes,* John Milton (1608–1674)
*Comus; a Masque,* John Milton
*Tales of the Mermaid Tavern,* Alfred Noyes
*Specimens of English Dramatic Poets Who Have Lived About The Time of Shakespeare,* Charles Lamb
*The Cries of London,* by Joseph Addison (*The Spectator,* No. 251, December 18, 1711.)

### TOPICS

Life of Ben Jonson
Influence of Seneca on Jonson's Tragedies
Influence of Plautus on Jonson's Comedies
Realism in Jonson's Plays
Types in Jonson's Plays
A Contrast between the Women in Jonson's Plays and Those in Shakespeare's
Ethical Ideas in Jonson's Plays
A Contrast between Jonson's Humor and Shakespeare's
Court Masques in the Seventeenth Century
The Puritan in Contemporary Drama of the Seventeenth Century
The Effect of Puritanism on the Theatre.
Child Actors: Nathaniel Field and Salathiel Pavy

# FRENCH DRAMA IN THE SIXTEENTH AND SEVENTEENTH CENTURIES

In France, as in the other European countries, by the latter part of the sixteenth century, troupes of professional actors had been organized. They wandered through the provinces, acting scenes from the mediæval mysteries or the popular farces. Meantime the court poets were producing translations of Seneca and Plautus, and writing plays of their own, which were based upon strictly classical models with classical themes. When in 1588 the Brotherhood of the Passion finally gave up the presentation of mysteries, their theatre in the Hôtel de Bourgogne in Paris came under the control of a band of these professional actors. There, under the patronage of the cultured taste of the King and his court, these literary plays were produced with great success. By 1599 a rival theatre, which devoted itself more to the production of the farces, was established at the Théâtre du Marais. Here soon were produced the plays of the strolling actor **Hardy** (Alexandre Hardy or Hardi, 1567?–1631). Hardy is said to have written more than six hundred plays, of which fewer than fifty have been preserved. He used the contemporary romantic dramas of Spain and the pastorals of Italy as his models although he invented his own plots. Being a practical playwright, he laid the emphasis on action rather than on long-winded narration as in the classical plays at the rival theatre. The result is the tragi-comedy, in which heroes and kingly personages engage in a conflict involving love and honor. The plays were in five acts, written in rimed alexandrines. Hardy's plays were popular, and developed in his Parisian audiences that love of the theatre which brought about the great period of French drama in the seventeenth century.

When the French mysteries were taken under the control of the Confrèrie de la Passion and presented in the Hôtel de Bourgogne, the mediæval "mansions" were transferred to the stage indoors, at first in three tiers, and then as one platform only. Since the theatre was modeled on an enclosed tennis court, it was long and narrow. The stage, which was at the extreme end, was too small to accommodate the complete mansions; therefore the places of the action were suggested only in the façades of numerous entrances. This resulted in a confused setting which the Three Unities helped to simplify. The castles, gardens, woods, houses, streets, sea-ports, and interiors that were supposed to be miles apart, many of which had been indicated on the one crowded stage, could be reduced to one scene only when the Unity of Place ruled the action.

By the time of Molière the theatre in France had assumed the modern form in all the essentials. The hall was still long and narrow, illuminated by the uncertain light of flickering candles; but the fundamental conditions of a roofed theatre with a stage set with scenery, and illuminated by artificial light, were present.

## CORNEILLE

**Pierre Corneille** (1606–1684) is considered the founder of French tragedy. He was born in Rouen, educated by the Jesuits, studied law, and was admitted to the bar. However, the young lawyer chose rather to devote himself to the career of a playwright; and after the successful production of several of his plays by the actors of the Théâtre du Marais, he found himself chosen by Cardinal Richelieu to be one of the "five poets" whose duty was to write or revise the dramas of their patron. But after an affront by Richelieu, Corneille withdrew to Rouen. Here he studied Lope de Vega, and wrote a play on a Spanish model. In November, 1636, this play, the epoch-making tragi-comedy (later called by the author a tragedy) *The Cid*, was produced at the Hôtel de Bourgogne, and took all Paris by storm. The fame of *The Cid* spread over Europe, and it was widely read and discussed. It was violently attacked, however, by the members of the French Academy, which Richelieu had founded in the preceding year, because the poet had violated the Three Unities, and so had produced an "improbable" action. As a consequence of this criticism, Corneille retired to Rouen for three years; and when he returned to Paris, he produced only plays that were in strict accord with the classical rules. Out of this controversy over *The Cid* emerged those rules for dramatic composition which became the fixed laws of French classicism; and the example of Corneille authoritatively established classicism in subsequent French drama.

Although Corneille wrote many plays of various types,—comedies, tragicomedies, tragedies, spectacle-operas,—he is most famous for his tragedies based on Roman history. Of all his dramas, *The Cid* (1636); *Horace* (1640); *Cinna* (1640); and *Polyeucte* (1643), are considered his masterpieces. These tragedies are dramatic conflicts of will against will. Reason conquers the passions, and the struggle is, therefore, psychological rather than external. They thrilled the audiences by the grandeur of the poetry, and by the eloquent discussion of lofty ideals of honor, duty, or patriotism.

Among other plays by him are the comedies *Mélite* (1629) and *Le Menteur* (1643); and the tragedies *Médée* (1635); *Rodogune* (1644); *Héraclius* (1646); *Andromède* (1651); *Oedipe* (1659); *Sophonisbe* (1663); *Tite et Bérénice* (1670).

## POLYEUCTE[1]

PIERRE CORNEILLE

*Produced at Paris at the Hôtel de Bourgogne in 1643*
*First printed in October, 1643*

Translated by Thomas Constable

### CHARACTERS

FELIX, *Roman senator, governor of Armenia*
POLYEUCTE, *an Armenian noble, son-in-law to Felix*
SEVERUS, *a Roman knight, favourite of the Emperor Decius*
NEARCHUS, *an Armenian noble, friend to Polyeucte*
PAULINE, *daughter to Felix, wife to Polyeucte*
STRATONICE, *companion to Pauline*
ALBIN, *friend to Felix*
FABIAN, *servant to Severus*
CLEON, *friend to Felix*
THREE GUARDS

*The Scene is at Melitena, capital of Armenia.*
*The action takes place in the Palace of Felix.*

## ACT I

POLYEUCTE. NEARCHUS

*Nearchus.* Shall woman's dream of terror hurl the dart?
Oh, feeble weapon 'gainst so great a heart!
Must courage proved a thousand times in arms
Bow to a peril forged by vain alarms?

*Polyeucte.* I know that dreams are born to fade away,
And melt in air before the light of day;
I know that misty vapours of the night
Dissolve and fly before the morning bright.
The dream is naught—but the dear dreamer—all!
She has my soul, Nearchus, fast in thrall;

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[1] Corneille explained that he based the play on a Greek story of the legend of Saint Polyeuctus, who suffered martyrdom in the 3rd century. Polyeuctus (Πολύευκτος) is a Greek word meaning *much wished-for, ardently desired.*

Who holds the marriage torch—august, divine,
Bids me to her sweet voice my will resign.
She fears my death—tho' baseless this her fright,
Pauline is wrung with fear—by day—by night;
My road to duty hampered by her fears,
How can I go when all undried her tears?
Her terror I disown—and all alarms,
Yet pity holds me in her loving arms:
No bolts or bars imprison,—yet her sighs
My fetters are—my conquerers, her eyes!
Say, kind Nearchus, is the cause you press
Such as to make me deaf to her distress?
The bonds I slacken I would not unloose—
Nothing I yield—yet grant a timely truce.
*Near.* How grant you know not what? Are you assured
Of constancy?—as one who has endured?
God claims your soul for Him!—Now! Now! To-day!
The fruit to-morrow yields—oh, who shall say?
Our God is just, but do His grace and power
Descend on recreants with equal shower?
On darkened souls His flame of light He turns,
Yet flame neglected soon but faintly burns,
And dying embers fade to ashes cold
If we the heart His spirit wooes withhold.
Great Heaven retains the fire no longer sought,
While ashes turn to dust, and dust to naught.
His holy baptism He bids thee seek,—
Neglect the call, and the desire grows weak.
Ah! whilst from woman's breast thou heedst the sighs,
The flame first flickers, then, untended —dies!
*Poly.* You know me ill,—'tis mine, that holy fire,
Fed, not extinguished, by unslaked desire;
Her tears—I view them with a lover's eye;
And yet your Christ is mine—a Christian I!
The healing, cleansing flood o'er me shall flow,
I would efface the stain from birth I owe;
I would be pure—my sealéd eyes would see!
The birthright Adam lost restored to me—
This, this, the unfading crown! For this I yearn
For that exhaustless fount I thirst, I burn.
Then, since my heart is true, Nearchus. say—
Shall I not grant to pity this delay?
*Near.* So doth the ghostly foe[1] our souls abuse,
And all beyond his force he gains by ruse;
He hates the purpose fast he cannot foil,—
Then he retreats—retreats but to recoil!
In endless barricade obstruction piles,—
To-day 'tis tears impede, to-morrow—smiles!
And this poor dream—his coinage of the night—
Gives place to other lures, all falsely bright:
All tricks he knows and uses—threats and prayers—
Attacks in parley—as the Parthian dares.[2]
In chain unheeded weakest link must fail,
So fortress yet unwon he'll mount and scale.
O break his bonds! Let feeble woman weep!
The heart that God has touched 'tis God must keep!
Who looks behind to dally with his choice
When Heaven demands—obeys another voice!

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[1] **ghostly foe:** Satan.

[2] **as . . . dares:** A Parthian shot has become proverbial. This ancient people surprised their foe in warfare by discharging arrows over their shoulders while at full gallop in a simulated retreat. (*Not in the French original.*)

*Poly.* Who loves thy Christ—say, must he love no other?
*Near.* He may—he must! 'Tis Christ says, "Love thy brother,"
Yet on the altar of the Heavenly King
No rival place, no alien incense fling!
Through Him—by Him—for Him—all goodness know!
'Tis from the source alone each stream must flow.
To please Him, wife, and wealth, and rank, and state
Must be forsaken—strait the heavenly gate.
Poor silly sheep! afar you err and stray
From Him who is The Life, The Truth, The Way!
My grief chokes utterance! I see your fate,
As round the fold the hungry wolves of hate
Closer and fiercer rage: from sword and flame
One shelter for His flock—one only Name!
The Cross alone our victor over fears,
Not this thy strength,—thy plea—a woman's tears!
*Poly.* I know thy heart! It is mine own—the tear
My pity drops hath ne'er a taint of fear!
Who dreads not torture, yet—to give relief
To her he loves, perforce must ease her grief!
If Heaven should claim my life, my death, my all,—
Then Heaven will give the strength to heed the call.
The shepherd guides me surely to the fold,
There, safe with Him, 'tis He will make me bold!
*Near.* Be bold! O come!
*Poly.* Yes, let thy faith be mine!
There—at his feet—do I my life resign
If but Pauline—my love—would give consent!
Else heaven were hell, and home but banishment!
*Near.* Come!—to return. Thrice welcome to her sight,
To see thee safe will double her delight;
As the pierced cloud unveils a brighter sun,—
So is her joy enhanced—thy glory won!
O come, they wait!
*Poly.* Appease her fear! Ah, this
Alone will give her rest—her lover bliss.
She comes!
*Near.* Then fly!
*Poly.* I cannot!
*Near.* To deny
Would yield thine enemy the victory!
He loves to kill, and knows his deadliest dart
Finds friends within the fort—thy traitor heart!

*Enter* PAULINE *and* STRATONICE

*Poly.* I needs must go, Pauline! My love, good-bye!
I go but to return—for thine am I!
*Pauline.* Oh, why this haste to leave a loving wife?
Doth honour call?—or fear'st thou for thy life?
*Poly.* For more, a thousandfold!
*Paul.* Great Gods above!
*Poly.* Thou hast my heart! Let this content thy love!
*Paul.* You love and yet you leave me. What am I?
Not mine to solve the dreary mystery!
*Poly.* I love thee more than self—than life—than fame—
But——
*Paul.* There is something that thou dar'st not name.
Oh, on my knees I supplicate, I pray,
Remove my darkness!—turn my night to day!
*Poly.* Oh, dreams are naught!
*Paul.* Yet, when they tell of thee,
I needs must listen, for I love! Ah, me!
*Poly.* Take courage, dear one, 'tis but for an hour,
Thy love must draw me back, for love hath power
O'er all in earth and heaven. My soul's delight,
I can no more! My only safety—flight!
[*Exeunt* POLYEUCTE *and* NEARCHUS
*Paul.* Yes, go, despise my prayer—my agony;
Go, ruthless—meet thy fate—forewarned by me;

Chase thy pursuer, herald thine own doom;
Go, kiss the murderer's hand, and hail the tomb!
Ah, Stratonice! for our boasted power
As sovereigns o'er man's heart! Poor regents of an hour!
Faint, helpless, moonbeam-light was all I gave,
The sun breaks forth—his queen becomes his slave!
Wooed? Yes; as other queens I held my court—
Won—but to lose my crown, and be the sport
Of proud, absorbing and imperious man!
*Stratonice.* Ah, man does what he wills—we, what we can;
He loves thee, lady!
*Paul.* Love should mate with trust;
He leaves me!
*Strat.* Lady, 'tis because he must!
He loves thee with a love will never die,
Then, if he leave thee, reason not the why:
Give him thy trust! Oh, thou shalt have reward,
For thee he hides the secret! Let him guard
Thy life beloved—in fullest liberty.
The wife who wholly trusts alone is free!
One heart for thee and him—one purpose sure,
Yet this heart beats to dare—and to endure.
The wife's true heart must o'er the peril sigh
Which meets his heart moved but to purpose high;
Thy pain his pain, but not his terror thine:
He is Armenian, thou of Roman line.
We, of Armenia, mock thy dreams to scorn,
For they are born of night, as truth of morn;
While Romans hold that dreams are heaven-sent,
And spring from Jove for man's admonishment.
*Paul.* Though this thy faith—if thou my dream shouldst hear—
My grief must needs be thine, thy fear my fear,
And, that the horror thou may'st fully prove,
Know that I—his dear wife—did once another love!
Nay, start not, shrink not, 'tis no tale of shame,
For though in other years the heavenly flame
Descended, kindled, scorched—it left me pure—
With courage to resign—with strength to endure.
He touched my heart, but never stained the soul
That gained this hardest conquest—self-control.
At Rome—where I was born—a soldier's eye
Marked this poor face, from which must Polyeucte fly;
Severus was his name:—Ah! memory
May spare love linked with death a tear, a sigh!
*Strat.* Say, is it he who, at the risk of life,
Saved Decius[1] from his foes and endless strife?
Who, dying, dealt to Persia stroke of death,
And shouted "Victory!" with his latest breath?
His whitening bones, amid the nameless brave,
Lie still unfound, unknown, without a grave;
Unburied lies his dust amid the slain
While Decius rears an empty urn in vain!
*Paul.* Alas! 'tis he; all Rome attests his worth,—
Hide not his memory, kindly Mother Earth!
'Tis but his memory that I adore—
The past is past—and I can say no more.[2]
All gifts save one had he—yes, Fortune held her hand,
And I, as Fortune's slave, obeyed my sire's command.

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[1] **Decius:** The Emperor of Rome (249–251 A.D.).

[2] **Alas . . . more:**
"*Hélas! c'était lui-même, et jamais votre Rome*
*N'a produit plus grand cœur, ni vu plus honnête homme.*"
("Alas! it was he; and never has your Rome
Produced a finer heart, a truer gentleman.")

*Strat.* Ah! I must wish that love the day had won!
*Paul.* Which duty lost—then had I been undone;
Though duty gave, yet duty healed, my pain;
Yet say not that my love was weak or vain!
Our tears fell fast, yet ne'er bore our distress
The fatal fruit of strife and bitterness.
Then, then, I left my hero, hope and Rome,
And, far from him, I found another home;
While he, in his despair, sought sure relief
In death, the only end to life's long grief!
You know the rest:—you know that Polyeucte's eye
Was caught,—his fancy pleased; his wife am I.
Once more by counsel of my father led,
To Armenia's greatest noble am I wed;
Ambition, prudence, policy his guide,
Yet only duty made Pauline his bride;
Love might have bound me to Severus' heart,
Had duty not enforced a sterner part.
Yes, let these fears attest, all trembling for his life,
That I am his for aye—his faithful, loving wife.
*Strat.* Thy new love true and tender as the old:—
But this thy dream? No more thy tale withhold!
*Paul.* Last night I saw Severus: but his eye
With anger blazed; his port was proud and high,
No suppliant he—no feeble, formless shade,
With dim, averted eye; no sword had made
My hero lifeless ghost. Nor wound, nor scar
Marked death his only conqueror in war.
Nor spoil of death, nor memory's child was he,
His mien triumphant, full of majesty!
So might victorious Caesar near his home
To claim the key to every heart in Rome!
He spoke: in nameless awe I heard his voice,—
"Give love, that is my due, to him—thy choice,—
But know, oh faithless one, ere day expires,
All vain these tears for him thy heart desires!"
Anon a Christian band (an impious horde),
With shameful cross in hand, attest his word;
They vouch Severus' truth—and, to complete
My doom, hurl Polyeucte beneath his feet!
I cried, "O father, timely succour bear!"
He heard, he came, my grief was now despair!
He drew his dagger—plunged it in the breast
Of him, my husband, late his honoured guest!
Relief came but from agony supreme—
I shrieked—I writhed—I woke—it was a dream!
And yet my dream is true!
*Strat.* 'Tis true your dream is sad,
But now you are awake, 'tis but a dream you had!
For horror's prey in darkness of the night
Is but our reason's sport in morning light.
How can you dread a shade? How a fond father fear,
Who as a son regards the man you hold so dear?
To phantom of the night no credence yield;
For him and you he chose thy strength and shield.
*Paul.* You say *his* words: at all my fears he smiles,
But I must dread these Christians and their wiles!
I dread their vengeance, wreaked upon my lord,
For Christian blood my father has outpoured!

*Strat.* Their sect is impious, mad, absurd and vain,
Their rites repulsive, as their cult profane.
Deride their altar, their weak frenzy ban,
Yet do they war with gods and not with man!
Relentless wills our law that they must die:
Their joy—endurance; death—their ecstasy;
Judged—by decree, the foes of human race,
Meekly their heads they bow—to court disgrace!
*Paul.* My father comes—oh, peace!

*Enter* Felix *and* Albin

*Felix.* Nay, peace is flown!
Thy dream begets dull fears, till now unknown;
In part this dream is true, and for the rest——
*Paul.* By what new fear, say, is thy heart opprest?
*Felix.* Severus lives!
*Paul.* Ah, this no cause for fear!
*Felix.* At Decius' court, he, held in honour dear,
Risked life to save his Emperor from his foes,
'Tis to his saviour Decius honour shows!
*Paul.* Thus fickle Fortune bows her head to fate,
And pays the honour due, though all too late!
*Felix.* He comes! Is near——
*Paul.* The gods——
*Felix.* Do all things well.
*Paul.* My dream fulfilled! But how? O father, tell!
*Felix.* Let Albin speak, who saw him face to face
With tribe of courtiers; all to him give place;
Unscathed in battle, all extol his fame,
Unstained, undimmed, his glory, life and name!
*Albin.* You know the issue of that glorious fight:
The crowning glory his—who, in despite
Of danger sore to life and liberty,
Became a slave to set his Emperor free:
Rome gave her honours to Severus' shade,
Whilst he, her ransomer, in a dungeon stayed.
His death they mourned above ten thousand slain,
While Persia held him—yes, their tears were vain,
But not in vain his noble sacrifice!
The king released him: Rome grudged not the price;
No Persian bribe could tempt him from his home,
When Decius cried—"Fight once again for Rome!"
Again he fights—he leads—all others hope resign;
But from despair's deep breast he plucks a star benign,
This—hope's fair fruit, contentment, plenty, ease,
Brings joy from grief, to crown a lasting peace.
The Emperor holds him as his dearest friend,
And doth Severus to Armenia send—
To offer up to Mars, and mighty Jove,
'Mid feast and sacrifice, his thanks and love.
*Felix.* Ah, Fortune, turn thy wheel, else I misfortune meet!
*Albin.* This news I learn'd from one of great Severus' suite:
Thence, swiftly here, the tale to tell I sped.
*Felix.* He who once vainly wooed, hopes now to wed.
The sacrifice, the offering, all are feigned,
All but the suit, which lightly I disdained.
*Paul.* Yes, this may be, for ah! he loved me well!
*Felix.* What room for hope? Such wrath is child of hell.
Before his righteous ire I shrink, I cower;
Revenge I dread—and vengeance linked with power
Unnerves me quite.
*Paul.* Fear not, his soul is great.
*Felix.* Thy comfort, oh my daughter, comes too late.

The thought to crush me down, to turn my heart to stone.
This, that I prized not worth for worth's dear sake alone!
Too well, Pauline, thou hast thy sire obeyed;
Thy heart was fond, but duty love betrayed.
How surely thy revolt had safety won!
'Tis thine obedience leaves us all undone.
In thee, in thee alone, one hope remains,
Love held him fast, relax not thou love's chains.
O Love, my sometime foe, forgive, be mine ally,
And let the dart that slew now bring the remedy!
*Paul.* Forbid it, Heaven! One good yet mine,—*my will*,
The dart that wounded has the power to kill.
One lesson woman learns—her feebleness;
Shame is the only grief without redress.
The traitor heart shall still a prisoner be;
For freedom were disgrace to thee and me!
*I will not* see him!
*Felix.* But one word! Be kind!
*Paul.* I will not, for I love!—and love is blind.
Before his kingly eye my soul to unveil
Were shame and failure: and I will not fail:
*I will not* see him!
*Felix.* One word more—"Obey!"
Wouldst thou thy father and his weal betray?
*Paul.* I yield! Come woe!—come shame!—come every ill!
My father thou!—and I thy daughter still!
*Felix.* I know thee pure.
*Paul.* And pure I will remain,
But, crushed and bruised, the flower no guilt shall stain.
I fear the combat that I may not fly,—
Hard-won the fight, and dear the victory.
Here, love, my curse! Here, dearest friend, my foe!
Yet will I arm me! Father, I would go
To steel my heart—all weapons to embrace!
*Felix.* I too will go, the conqueror's march to grace!
Restore thy strength, ere yet it be too late,
And know that in thy hands thou hold'st our fate!
*Paul.* Go, broken heart, to probe thy wound; cut deep and do not spare!
Herself — the crowning sacrifice — the victim shall prepare!

## ACT II

Severus. Fabian

*Severus.* Let Felix bow to Jove and incense pour,—
I seek a dearer shrine, for I adore
Nor Jove, nor Mars, nor Fortune—but Pauline.
This fruit now ripening late my hand would glean:
You know, my friend, the god who wings my way,—
You know the only goddess I obey:
What reck the gods on high our sacrifice and prayer?
An earthly worship mine, sole refuge, from despair!
*Fabian.* Ah! You may see her——
*Sev.* Blessèd be thy tongue!
O magic work, that turns my grief to song!
Yet, if she now forget each fair, fond vow?
She loved me once,—but does she love me now?
On that sweet face shall I but trouble see—
Who hope for love undimmed, for ecstasy?
Great Decius gives her hand, but if her heart
Be mine no more—then let vain hope depart!
This mandate binds her father only; she
Shall give no captive hand—her heart is free:
No promise wrung, no king's command be mine to claim,
Her love the boon I crave; all else an empty name!

*Fab.* Yes,—you may—see her— *see* her—this you may—
*Sev.* Thy speech is halting—odious thy delay!
She loves no more? I grope! O give me light!
*Fab.* O see her not, for painful were the sight!
In Rome each matron's kind! In Rome all maids are fair!
Let lips meet other lips—seek for caresses there!
No stately Claudia will refuse—no Julia proud disdain;
A hero captures every heart, from Antioch to Spain!
*Sev.* To wed a queen—an empress—were only loss and shame;
*One* heart for me—Pauline's! *One* boast—that dearest name!
Her love was virgin gold! O ne'er shall baser metal ring
From mine, who live her name to bless! her peerless praise to sing!
O, words are naught, till that I see her face,—
Then doubly naught till I my love embrace.
In every war my hope was placed in death,
Her name upon my lips at every breath:
My rank, my fame, now hers and hers alone,
What is not hers, hers only—I disown!
*Fab.* Once more, oh see her not, 'twere for thy peace!
*Sev.* Thy meaning, knave, or let this babble cease!
Say, was she cold? My love! My only life!
*Fab.* No—but—my lord——
*Sev.* Say on!
*Fab.* Another's wife!
*Sev.* [*Reels*]. Help!—No, I will not blench—ah, say you lie!
If this be true!—ye gods—can I be I?
*Fab.* No, thou art changed. Where is thy courage fled?
*Sev.* I know not, Fabian. Lost! Gone! Vanished! Dead!
I thought my strength was oak—'tis but a reed!
Pauline is wed, then am I lost indeed!
Hope hid beyond the cloud, yet still fond hope was there:
But now all hope is dead, lives only black despair!
Pauline another's wife?
*Fab.* Yes, Polyeucte is her lord.
He came, he saw, he conquered thine adored.
*Sev.* Her choice is not unworthy—his a name
Illustrious, from a line of kings he came—
Cold comfort for a wound no cure can heal!
My cause is lost,—foredoomed without appeal!
Malignant Jove, to drag me back to day!
Relentless Fate, to quench hope's dawning ray!
Take back your gifts! One boon alone I crave,
That only boon to none denied—the grave.
Yet would I see her, breathe one last good-bye,
Would hear once more that voice before I die!
My latest breath would still my homage pay,—
That memory mine, when lost to realms of day.
*Fab.* Yet think, my lord——
*Sev.* Oh, I have thought of all;
What worser ill can dull despair befall?
She will not see me?
*Fab.* Yes, my lord, but——
*Sev.* Cease!
*Fab.* 'Twill but enhance the grief I would appease.
*Sev.* For hopeless ill, good friend, I seek no cure.
Who welcomes death can life's short pain endure!
*Fab.* O lost indeed, if round her fatal light you hover!—
The lover, losing all, speaks hardly like a lover!
While passion still is lord—the passion-swept is slave—
From this last bitterness would I Severus save!
*Sev.* That word, my friend, unsay; tho' grief this bosom tear,
The hand that wounds I kiss—love vanquishes despair;

Fate only, not Pauline, the foe that I accuse,
No plighted faith she breaks who did this hand refuse.
Duty—her father—Fate—these willed, she but obeyed;
Not hers the woe, the strife that envious Até[1] made!
Untimely, Fortune's shower must drown me, not revive;
Too lavish and too late her fatal gifts arrive.
The golden apple falls, the gold is turned to dross:
When Fate at Fortune mocks, all gain is only loss!
*Fab.* Yes, I will go to tell her thou hast drained
To the last drop the cup that Fate ordained.
She knows thee hero, but she feared that pain
Might prove thee also man—by passion slain.
She feared Despair, who gains the victory
O'er other men, might e'en thy master be!
*Sev.* Peace! Peace! She comes!
*Fab.* To thine own self be true!
*Sev.* Nay! True to her! Shall I her life undo?
She loves the Armenian!

*Enter* PAULINE

*Paul.* Yes, that debt I pay,
Hard-wrung, acquitted,—his my love alway!
Who has my hand, he holds—shall hold—my heart!
Truth is my guide,—let sophistry depart!
Had Fate been kind, then had Pauline been thine,
Heart, faith and duty, linked with bliss divine.
In vain had fickle Fortune barred the way,
Want had been wealth with thee, my guide, my stay,
And poverty had fallen from the wings
Of soaring love, who mocks the wealth of kings!
Not mine to choose, for he—my father's choice—
Must needs be mine; yes, when I heard his voice,
Duty must echo be: if thou couldst cast
Before my feet an emperor's crown,—a past
By worth and glory lit—beloved, adored—
Yet at my father's word, "Not this thy lord;
Take one despised—nay, loathed—to share thy bed,"—
Him, and not thee, belovéd, would I wed.
Duty, obedience, must have been the part
Of me, who own their sway, e'en with a broken heart!
*Sev.* O happy thou! O easy remedy!
One poor faint sigh cures love's infirmity!
Thy heart thy tool, o'er every passion queen,
Beyond all change and chance thou sit'st serene!
In easy flow can pass thy love new-born
From cold indifference to colder scorn;
Such resolution is the equal mate
Of god or monster, love, aversion, hate.
This fine-spun adamant Ithuriel's spear
Could never pierce:[2] for other stuff is here!
[*Points to himself.*]
No faint "Alas!" no swift-repented sigh
Can heal the cureless wound from which I die.
Sure, reason finds that love his easy prey
With Lethe[3] aye at hand to point the way;
With ordered fires like thine, I too could smother
A heart in leash, find solace in another.
Too fair, too dear—from whom the Fates me sever!

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[1] Até: goddess of Discord, who threw among the assembled gods the golden apple inscribed "To the fairest," and so brought about the fateful decision of Paris in favor of Aphrodite (Venus) that led to the Trojan War.

[2] This fine-spun . . . . pierce: *Adamant* was considered to be a stone of impenetrable hardness. *Ithuriel* was the angel in *Paradise Lost* who by a touch of his spear transformed Satan from one of his disguises to his true shape. (*This confused metaphor does not occur in the fine simplicity of the original French lines.*)

[3] Lethe: the river of Hades, a draught of whose waters brought forgetfulness of the past. (*Not in the original.*)

Thou hast no heart to give—thou lov'dst me never!
*Paul.* Too plain, Severus, I my torture show,—
Tho' flame leap up no more, the embers glow;
Far other speech and voice, and mien were mine,
Could I forget that once thou call'dst me thine!
Tho' reason rules, yes, gains the mastery—
No queen benignant, but a tyrant she!
Oh, if I conquer—if the strife I gain,
Yet memory for aye is linked with pain!
I feel the charm that binds me still to thee;
If duty great, yet great thy worth to me:
I see thee still the same, who waked the fire
Which waked in me ineffable desire.
Begirt by crown of everlasting fame
Thou art more glorious—yet art still the same.
I know thy valour's worth,—well hast thou justified
That bounding hope of mine, though fruitage was denied,
Yet this same fate which did our union ban
Hath made me, fated—wed another man.
Let Duty still be queen! Yea, let her break
The heart she pierces, yet can never shake.
The virtue, once thy pride in days gone by—
Doth that same worth now merit blasphemy?
Bewail her bitter fruit—but praiséd be
The rights that triumph over thee and me!
*Sev.* Forgive, Pauline, forgive; ah! grief hath made me blind
To all but grief's excess, and fortune most unkind.
Forgive that I mistook—nay, treated as a crime—
Thy constancy of soul, unequalled and sublime;
In pity for my life forlorn, my peace denied,
Ah! show thyself less fair,—one least perfection hide!
Let some alloy be seen, some saving weakness left,
Take pity on a heart of thee and Heaven bereft!
One faintest flaw reveal, to give my soul relief!
Else, how to bear the love that only mates with grief?
*Paul.* Alas! the rents in armour donned and proved
Too well my fight proclaim; yes, I have loved;
The traitor sigh, the tear unbid, attest
The combat fierce—the warrior sore distrest.
Say, who can stanch these wounds, that armour mend?
Thou who hast pierced, thou, thou alone defend!
Ah, if thou honourest my victory—
Depart, that thou may'st still defender be!
So dry the tears that, to my shame, still flow—
So quench the fire would work my overthrow!
Yes, go, my only friend, with me combine
To end my torture, for thy pain is mine!
*Sev.* This last poor drop of comfort may not be?
*Paul.* The cup is poisoned both for me and thee!
*Sev.* The flower is gone—I cherish but the root!
*Paul.* Untimely blossom bears a fated fruit!
*Sev.* My grief be mine! Let memory remain!
*Paul.* That grief might hope beget, so leave a stain!
*Sev.* Not mine to stain what Heaven hath made so pure!
For me one offering left: 'tis this: Endure!
Thy glory shall be mine, my load I bear,
So, spotless, thou thy peerless crown shalt wear!

Farewell, my love, farewell; I go to prove my faith,
To bless, to save thy life, so will I mate with death!
If prostrate from the blow, there yet remains of life
Enough to summon death, and end the piteous strife!
*Paul.* My grief, too deep for voice, shall silent be,
There, in my chamber, will I pray for thee!
When thou art gone, great Heaven shall hear my cry;
Grief's fruit for thee be hope—death—immortality!
*Sev.* Now with my loss alone let Fate contented be!
May Heaven shower bliss and peace on Polyeucte and thee!
*Paul.* Stern Fate obeyed, end, Death, his agony,
And Jove receive my hero—to the sky!
*Sev.* *Thou wast* my heaven!
*Paul.* My father I obeyed—
*Sev.* O victim pure, obedient, undismayed!
Pauline—too fair—too dear—I can no more!
*Paul.* So must I say—depart—where I adore! [*Exit* SEVERUS

*Strat.* Yes, it is hard—most sad—behold my tears!
But now, at least, there is no cause for fears:
Thy dream is but a dream—is naught, is vain;
Severus pardons. Gone that cause for pain!
*Paul.* Oh, if from pity start thy easy tear,
Add not that other woe—forgotten fear!
Ah! let me breathe, some respite give from trouble,
Those fears, half-dead, thou dost revive, redouble!
*Strat.* What dost thou dread?
*Paul.* Heaven—hell—earth—empty air!
All, all is food for dread to my despair,
As thou unveil'st, begirt in lurid light,
The pallid ghost that slew me in the night!
*Strat.* Severus he by name, yet noble in his heart!
*Paul.* Ah, Polyeucte bathed in blood! Depart! depart!
*Strat.* For Polyeucte's welfare did Severus pray!
*Paul.* Yes, yes, his heart is great; be that my stay!
Yet, tho' his truth, his faith, well-provéd be,
Most baleful is his presence here to me;
Yea, tho' he would all ill for me undo—
Yet he hath power, he loves—he came to woo.

*Enter* POLYEUCTE *and* NEARCHUS

*Poly.* The source of tears is dry, oh, weep no more,
Thy grief lay down, thy fearful heart restore!
Let night's dark dream with superstition die,
The dream is past, for here in life am I!
*Paul.* The day is young, and oh, the day is long,—
And half the dream is true, and Fate is strong;
Severus have I seen, who thought him dead!
*Poly.* I know it! Let no tear for this be shed!
Secure with thee am I! Tho' great the knight,
Thy father will command to do me right;
The general is a man of honour,—he
Would ne'er that honour dim by treachery!
He comes in amity, our friend, our guest;
To greet his worth and valour now my quest.
*Paul.* Radiant he came, who left me hopeless, sad;
But he will come no more,—this grace I had.
*Poly.* What? Thinkest thou that I can jealous be?
*Paul.* An outrage this on him, on thee, on me!
He came in peace, who all my peace hath marred.
Who would run safely, every step must guard;

The wife who danger courts but courts her fall—
My husband, aid me!—I would tell thee all!
His worth, his charm, do my weak heart enflame—
A traitor *here!* And he is aye the same!
If I should gaze, and long—'gainst virtue, honour, sense,
The citadel I yield, and mine[1] my own defence!
I know my virtues sure, and fair my fame,
But struggle is defeat,—and combat shame!
*Poly.* Oh, true thy shield, thy victory is won,
He only who has lost thee is undone;
His noble grief the cost of all my bliss,
Ah, Cleopatra's pearl[2] was naught to this!
The more my faults I see, the more thy truth I learn,
The more do I admire——

*Enter* Cleon

*Cleon.* My lord, the altars burn
With holy fire. The victim they prepare;
On thee alone they wait, our rites to share.
*Poly.* Go, we do follow thee!
*Paul.* I cannot go;
Severus flies my sight; to him I owe
My absence—not, alas! to him alone!
Go thou, and oh, remember he is great;
In his sole hands Severus holds thy fate!
*Poly.* A foe so great, so noble, is a friend,
Oh, not from him the lance that Heaven will send!
[*Exeunt* Pauline, Stratonice *and* Cleon

*Near.* Where go'st thou?
*Poly.* To the temple is the call.
*Near.* What! Wouldst thou mingle in their heathen brawl?
Thou art a Christian, and canst thou forget?
*Poly.* Canst *thou*, who 'fore mine eyes the cross didst set?
*Near.* Not mine their gods!
*Poly.* He calls me! I must go!
*Near.* I fly their altars!
*Poly.* I would overthrow!
Not mine to fly a worship I disown,
By me Jehovah, King of kings, be known!
Not mine to tremble as I kiss the rod!
I conquer by the Cross, I fight for God!
Thou wouldst abstain! For me another course—
From Heaven the call, and Heaven will give the force!
What! Yield to evil! His Cross on my brow!
His freemen we! O fight, Nearchus, now!
For us our Lord was scourged, pierced, tortured, slain!
For us He bled! Say, has He died in vain?
*Near.* Let timely moderation temper zeal!
*Poly.* His—His alone am I! His woe my weal!
*Near.* In love with death?
*Poly.* For Him I love I die!
He died for me! So death is victory!
*Near.* Thy flesh is weak!
*Poly.* Yet He will make me bold!
*Near.* And if thou waver?
*Poly.* He will me uphold!
*Near.* To tempt the Lord thy God were an offence.
*Poly.* He is my shield—hence—cursed tempter, hence!
*Near.* In time of need the faith must be confessed.
*Poly.* The offering grudged is sacrifice unblessed.
*Near.* Seek thou the death thine own self-will prepares!
*Poly.* A crown I seek, which every martyr shares!
*Near.* A life of duty well that crown can win.
*Poly.* The purest life on earth is stained with sin.
Why yield to time and chance what death assures?
Death but the gate of life that aye endures.
If I be His—let me be His alone!

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[1] **mine:** undermine.

[2] **Cleopatra's pearl:** The pearls in the ear drops of Cleopatra, which she proposed to dissolve in vinegar at a costly repast, the subject of a wager, were valued at four hundred thousand dollars.

The faith that soars shall full fruition own;
Who trusts, yet fears and doubts, his faith is dead!
*Near.* Not death the Christian's prayer, but daily bread.
Live to protect the flock, so sore oppressed.
*Poly.* Example be their friend, most sure, most blessed!
*Near.* Thou woo'st thy death!
*Poly.* Is this poor life so dear?
*Near.* Ah, I must own my heart is slave to fear.
The rack! The cross! I might my Lord disown!
*Poly.* From Him our help, our strength, from Him alone!
Who fears denial does at heart deny;
Who doubts the power of faith makes faith a lie!
*Near.* Who leans upon a reed shall find distress.
*Poly.* His staff will guide, support my feebleness.
Thou wert my staff, to show the Truth, the Way,
Must I now urge thee to the realms of day?
Thou fearest death?
*Near.* The Christ once feared to die!
*Poly.* Yet drained the bitter cup of agony!
The way that thou hast shown—that way He trod;
His way be ours to lead man's soul to God—
For heathen shrine—to rear His altar fair,—
The deathless hope alone can kill despair!
Thou said'st: "If Him thou wilt for pattern take,
Then leave wife, wealth, home, all for His dear sake!"
Alas! that love of thine, now weak and poor,
Glows yet within my breast—and shall endure;
Ah must the dawn of this my perfect day
Find thy full light beclouded, dimmed, astray?
*Near.* Baptismal waters yet bedew thy brow;
The grace that once was mine, that grace hast thou.
No worldly thought has checked the flow, no guilty act has stained;
Thy wings are strong, while mine are weak; thy love is fresh, unfeigned,—
To these, thy heights, I cannot soar, held down by sense and sin,
How can I storm the citadel?—the traitor lurks within!
Forsake me not, my God! Thy spirit pour!
Oh, make me true to Him whom I adore!
With Thee I rise,—the flesh, the world, defy,
Thou, who hast died for me, for Thee I die!
Yes, I will go! With heaven-born zeal I burn,
I will be free,—all Satan's lures I spurn;
Death, torture, outrage, these will I embrace,
To nerve my heart and arm, Heaven grant me grace!
*Poly.* On eagle wings of faith and hope ascend!
I hail my master—recognise my friend;
The old faith wanes,—we light her funeral pyre,
Her ashes fall before our holy fire;
Come, trample under foot the gods that men have wrought;
The rotten, helpless staff is broke, is gone—is naught.
Their darkness felt they own, but let them see the light!
Their gods of stone, of clay, but vampires of the night!
Their dust shall turn to dust,—shall moulder with the sod,
Ours for His name to fight:—the issue is with God.
*Near.* The cause is just, is true—O coward heart, be still!
I lived to doubt His word—I die to do His will!

## ACT III

### PAULINE

*Paul.* Cares—clouded and confused—oppress, obscure
In changeful forms, my eye, my heart, my mind:

My soul finds room for every guest save one;
Fair hope has flown,—no star can pierce my night:
Each tyrant rages 'gainst opposing foe
In deadly fight—yet brings to light no friend:
In travail sore hope comes not to the birth—
Fear hydra-headed[1] terror still begets;—
All fancies grim I see, and straight embrace,
At hope I clutch, who still eludes my grasp;
Her rainbow hues adored are but a frame
That serve by contrast to make fear more dark.
Severus haunts me—oh, I know his love,
Yet hopeless love must mate with jealousy,—
While Polyeucte, who has won what he has lost,
Can meet no rival with an equal eye.
The fruit of rivalry is ever hate
And envy; both must still engender strife:
One sees that rival hand has grasped his prize,
The other yearns for prize himself has missed.
Weak reason naught, when headlong passion reigns,
For valour seeks a sword, and love—revenge.
One fears to see the prize he gained impaired,
The other would that wrested prize regain;
While patience, duty, conscience, vail their heads
'Fore obstinate defence and fierce attack.
Such steeds no charioteer controls—for they
Mistake both curb and rein for maddening whip,
Ah! what a base, unworthy fear is mine!
How ill I read these fair, these noble souls,
Whose virtue must all common snares o'erleap!
Their gold unstained by dross or mean alloy!
As generous foes so will they—must they meet!
*Yet are they rivals*—this the thought that kills!
Not even here—at home—is Polyeucte safe,
The eagle wings of Rome reach over all.
Oh, if my father bow to Roman might,
If he repent the choice that he hath made,—
At this one thought hope's flame leaps up to die!
Or—if new-born—dies ere she see the light.
Hope but deceived,—my fear alone I trust,
Heaven grant such confidence be false—be vain!

*Enter* STRATONICE

Nay, let me know the worst! What, girl!—no word?
The rites are o'er? What hast thou seen—what heard?
They met in amity?—In peace they part?
*Strat.* Alas! Alas!
*Paul.* Nay, soothe my aching heart!
I would have comfort,—but this face of woe—
A quarrel?
*Strat.* Polyeucte—Nearchus—go—
The Christians——
*Paul.* What of them?
*Strat.* Ah, how to speak——
*Paul.* They on my father would their vengeance wreak?
*Strat.* Oh, fear whate'er thou wilt—that fear too small!
*Paul.* The Christians rise?
*Strat.* Oh, would that this were all!
Thy dream, Pauline, is true; Polyeucte is——
*Paul.* Dead?
*Strat.* Ah, no, he lives—yet every hope is fled;
That courage once so high, that noble name
Sunk in the mire of everlasting shame!

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[1] hydra-headed; The *Hydra* was the nine-headed monster finally slain by Hercules.

He lives,—who once was lovely in thy sight—
As monster foul—his every breath a blight;
The foe of Heaven, of Jove, of all our race,
His kisses poison, and his love—disgrace!
Wretch, coward, miscreant, steeped in infamy,
O worse than every name!—a *Christian* he!
*Paul.* Nay, that one word's enough! There needed not abuse.
*Strat.* My words fit well their guilt;—with evil make no truce.
*Paul.* If *he* be *Nazarene*—he must an outcast be!
But insult to my lord is insult unto me!
*Strat.* Think only that he hails the Cross, the badge of shame.
*Paul.* My plighted faith, my troth, my duty still the same!
*Strat.* When twined about thy breast, the hideous serpent slay!
Who mocks the Gods on high will his own wife betray!
*Paul.* If he be false, yet I will still be true,
The ties that bind me I will ne'er undo:
Let fate—Severus—passion—all combine
Against him!—I am his, and he is mine.
Yes, mine to guide, lead, win, forgive, and save!
I seek his honour tho' he court the grave.
Let Polyeucte be Christ's slave!—For woe, for weal,
He is my lord; the bond I owe I seal;
I fear my father,—all his vengeance dread.
*Strat.* Fierce burns his rage o'er that devoted head;—
Yet embers of old love still faintly glow,
And through his wrath some weak compassion show;
'Gainst Polyeucte biting words alone he speaks—
But on Nearchus fullest vengeance wreaks!
*Paul.* Nearchus lured him on?
*Strat.* The tempter he;
Such friendship leads to death, or infamy.
Oh, curséd friend, who, in dear love's despite,
Has torn him from thine arms—his neophyte![1]
He dragged him to the front;—baptized, annealed—[2]
He fights for Christ!—The secret is revealed.
*Paul.* Which I would know—and straightway had thy blame!
*Strat.* Ah! I foresaw not this—their deed of shame!
*Paul.* Ere dull despair o'ermaster all my fears,
Oh, let me gauge the worth of woman's tears!
For, if the daughter lose, the wife may gain,—
Or Felix may relent, if Polyeucte mock my pain;
If both are adamant unto my prayer,
Then—then alone—take counsel from despair!
How passed the temple sacrifice? Hide naught, my friend, tell all!
*Strat.* The horror and the sacrilege must I, perforce, recall?
To say the words, to think the thoughts, seems blasphemy and shame;
Yet will I tell their infamy,—their deed without a name.
To silence hushed, the people knelt, and turned them to the East;
Then impious Polyeucte and his friend mock sacrifice and priest.
They every holy name invoked jeer with unbridled tongue,
To laughter vile the incense rose—'tis thus our hymn was sung;
Both loud and deep the murmurs rang, and Felix' face grew pale,
Then Polyeucte mad defiance hurls, while all the people quail.
"Vain are your gods of wood and stone!" his voice was stern and high—
"Vain every rite, prayer, sacrifice," so ran his blasphemy.
"Your Jupiter is parricide, adulterer, demon, knave,
"He cannot listen to your cry, not his to bless or save.

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[1] **neophyte:** new convert to Christianity.
[2] **annealed:** *figuratively*, made enduring.

“One God—Jehovah—rules alone, supreme o’er earth and heaven,
“And ye are His—yes, only His—to Him your prayers be given!
“He is our source, our life, our end,—no other god adore,
“To Him alone all prayer is due, then serve Him evermore!
“Who kneels before a meaner shrine, by devils’ power enticed,
“Denies his Maker and his King, denies the Saviour Christ.
“He is our source, our guide, our end, our prophet, priest and king;
“’Twas He that nerved Severus’ arm,—His praise let Decius sing.
“Jehovah rules the battle-field ye call the field of Mars,
“He only grants a glorious peace, ’tis He guides all our wars.
“He casts the mighty from his seat, He doth the proud abase,—
“They only peace and blessing know who love and seek His face.
“His sword alone is strong to strike, His shield our only guard.
“He will His bleeding saints avenge, He is their sure reward.
“In vain to Jove and feeble Mars your full libations pour—
“Oh, kneel before the might ye spurn, the God ye mock—adore!”
Then Polyeucte the shrine o’erthrows, the holy vessels breaks,
Nor wrath of Jove, nor Felix’ ire, his fatal purpose shakes.
Foredoomed by Fate, the Furies’ prey—they rush, they rend, they tear,
The vessels all to fragments fly—all prone the offerings fair;
And on the front of awful Jove they set their impious feet,
And order fair to chaos turn, and thus their work complete.
Our hallowed mysteries disturbed, our temple dear profaned,
Mad flight and tumult dire let loose, proclaim a God disdained.
Thus pallid fear broods over all, presaging wrath to come,
While Felix—but I mark his step!—’tis he shall speak the doom.

*Paul.* How threatening, how dark his mien! How lightning-fraught his eye!
Where wrath and grief, revenge and pain, do strive for mastery!

*Enter* FELIX

*Felix.* O insolence undreamed!—Before my very eyes!—
Before the people’s gaze! It is too much!—he dies!

*Paul.* O father!—on my knees! [*Kneels.*] Unsay that word!

*Felix.* Nearchus’ doom I speak,—not his, thy lord.
Though all unworthy he to be my son,
Yet still he bears the name that he hath won;
Nor crime of his nor wrath of mine shall ever move
Thy father’s heart to hate the man thou crown’st with love!

*Paul.* Ne’er vainly have I sued for pity from my sire!

*Felix.* And yet meet food were he for righteous ire!
To recount an act so fell my feeble words too weak,
But thou hast heard the tale my lips refuse to speak
From her, thy maiden; she hath told thee all.

*Paul.* Nearchus goaded—planned—and he shall fall!

*Felix.* So taught by torture of his vilest friend,
Shall Polyeucte mark of guilt the certain end,
When of the frenzied race he sees the goal,
The dread of torture shall subdue his soul!
Who mocked the thought of death, when death he views,
Will choose an easier mate—and rightly choose.
That shadowy guest, that doth his soul entice,
Once master, glues all ardour into ice,
And that proud heart, which never meekness knew,
When face to face with Death—will learn to sue!

*Paul.* What! Thinkest thou his soul can ever blench?

*Felix.* Death’s mighty flood must every furnace quench!

*Paul.* It might! It may!—I know such things can be!
A Polyeucte changed—debased—forsworn I see!
O, changeful Fortune! changeless Polyeucte move,
And grant a boon denied by father's love!
*Felix.* My love too plain—myself too weakly kind,
Let him repent and he shall pardon find;
Nearchus' sin is his,—and yet the grace
He shall not win, thy Polyeucte may embrace!
My duty—to a father's love betrayed—
Hath of thy sire a fond accomplice made;
A healing balm I bring for all thy fears,
I look for thanks, and lo—thou giv'st me tears!
*Paul.* I give no thanks—no cause for thanks I find;
I know the Christian temper—know their mind,
They can blaspheme, but ah, they cannot lie!
They know not how to yield—but they can die!
*Felix.* As bird in hand, he holds his pardon still.
*Paul.* The bird escapes, when 'tis the owner's will.
*Felix.* He death escapes—if so he do elect.
*Paul.* He death embraces—as doth all his sect.
Is't thus a father pleads for his own son?
*Felix.* Who wills his death is by himself undone.
*Paul.* He cannot see!
*Felix.* Because he chooses night.
Who loves the darkness hateth still the light.
*Paul.* O, by the Gods—
*Felix* Nay, daughter, save thy breath;
Spurned—outraged—'tis the Gods demand his death.
*Paul.* They hear our prayers—
*Felix.* Nay, then let Polyeucte pray!
*Paul.* Since Decius gives thee power,—that word unsay!
*Felix.* He gives me power, Pauline, to do his will
Against his foes—'gainst all who work him ill.
*Paul.* Is Polyeucte his foe?
*Felix.* All Christians rebels are.
*Paul.* Thy son shall plead more loud than policy or war.
For mine is thine; O father, save thine own—
*Felix.* The son who is a traitor I disown!
For treason is a crime without redress,
'Gainst which all else sinks into nothingness.
*Paul.* Too great thy rigour!
*Felix.* Yet more great his guilt.
*Paul.* Too true my dream! Must his dear blood be spilt?
With Polyeucte, I too—thy child—shall fall!
*Felix.* The Gods—the Emperor—rule over all.
*Paul.* O hear our dying supplication—hear!
*Felix.* Not Jove alone, but Decius I fear:—
But why anticipate a doom so sad?
Shall this—his blindness—make thy Polyeucte mad?
Fresh Christian zeal remains not always new,
The sight of death compels a saner view.
*Paul.* O, if thou lov'st him still, all hope forsake!
In one day can he two conversions make?
Not this the Christians' mould: they never change;
His heart is fixed—past power of man to estrange.
This is no poison quaffed all unawares,
What martyrs do and dare—that Polyeucte dares;
He saw the lure by which he was enticed,
He thinks the universe well lost for Christ.
I know the breed; I know their courage high,
They love the cross,—so, for the cross, they die.

We see two stakes of wood, the felon's shame,
They see a halo round one matchless Name.
To powers of earth, and hell, and torture blind,
In death, for Him they love, they rapture find.
They joy in agony,—our gain their loss,
To die for Christ they count the world but dross:
Our rack their crown, our pain their highest pleasure,
And in the world's contempt they find their treasure.
Their cherished heritage is—martyrdom!
*Felix.* Let then this heir into his kingdom come!
No more!——
*Paul.* O father!

*Enter* Albin

*Felix.* Albin, is it done?
*Albin.* It is,—Nearchus' frantic race is run!
*Felix.* And with what eye saw Polyeucte the sight?
*Albin.* With envious eye,—as one who sees a light
That lures him, moth-like, to devouring flame.
His heart is fixed, his mind is still the same.
*Paul.* 'Tis as I said—oh, father, yet once more—
If thou hast ever loved me,—I implore!
Let filial duty and obedience plead
For his dear life! To my last prayer give heed!
*Felix.* Too much thou lovest an unworthy lord!
*Paul.* Thou gavest him my hand, 'twas at thy word
I gave both love and duty; what I give
I take not back; oh, Polyeucte must live!
For his dear sake I quenched another flame
Most pure. Is he my lord alone in name?
O, by my blind and swift obedience paid
To thy command—be thy hard words unsaid!
I gave thee all a daughter had to give,
Grant, father, this one prayer—Let Polyeucte live!
By thy stern power, which now I only fear,
Make thou that power benignant, honoured, dear!
Thou gav'st that gift unsought,—that gift restore!
I claim it at the giver's hand once more!
*Felix.* Importunate! Although my heart is soft,
It is not wax,—and these entreaties oft
Repeated waste thy breath, and vex mine ear,
For man is deaf to what he will not hear.
*I am the master!* This let all men know,
And if thou force that note thou'lt find 'tis so.
Prepare to see thy cursèd Christian fool,
Do thou caress when I have scourged the mule,—
Go! vex no more a loving father's ear,
From Polyeucte's self win what thou hold'st so dear.
*Paul.* In pity!——
*Felix.* Leave me, leave me here alone!——
Say more—my goaded heart will turn to stone;
Vex me no more—I will not be denied!
Go, save thy madman from his suicide!
[*Exit* Pauline

How met Nearchus death?
*Albin.* The fiend abhorred
He hailed,—embraced: "For Christ!" his latest word;
No sigh, no tear,—he passed without amaze
Adown the narrow vale with upward gaze.
*Felix.* And he—his friend?
*Albin.* Is, as I said, unmoved
He looks on death but as a friend beloved,
He clasped the scaffold as a guide most sure,
And, in his prison, he can still endure.
*Felix.* Oh, wretched that I am!
*Albin.* All pity thee.
*Felix.* With reason greater than they know. Ah, me!

Thought surges upon thought, and has its will,
Care, gnawing upon care, my soul must kill;
Love—hate—fear—pain: I am of each the prey,
I grope for light, but never find the day!—
Oh, what I suffer thou canst not conceive,
Each passion rages, but can ne’er relieve;
For I have noble thoughts that die still-born,
And I have thoughts so base my soul I scorn.
I love the foolish wretch who is my son,
I hate the folly which hath all undone;
I mourn his death,—yet, if I Polyeucte save,
I see of all my hopes the cruel grave!
’Gainst Gods and Emperor too sore the strife,
For my renown I fear,—fear for my life
I must myself undo to save my son,
For, should I spare him, then am I undone!
*Albin.* Decius a father is, and must excuse
A father’s love—oh, he will not refuse!
*Felix.* His edict is most clear:—“All Christians are my foes.”
The higher be their rank the more the evil grows.
If birth and state be high, their crime shows more notorious,
If he who shield be great, his fall the more inglorious;
And if I give Nearchus to the flame
Yet stoop to shield my own—thrice damned my name!
*Albin.* If by thy fiat he cannot escape the grave,
Implore of Decius’ grace the life thou canst not save.
*Felix.* So would Severus work my ruin quite—
I fear his power, his wrath,—for might is right—
If crime with punishment I do not mate.
How high soe’er, worth what it may, I fear his hate,
For he is man, and feels as man, and I
Once spurned his suit with base indignity.
Yes, he at Decius’ ear would work my woe,
He loves Pauline, thus Polyeucte is his foe:
All weapons possible to love and war,
And those who let them rust but laggards are.
I fear—and fear doth give our vision scope—
E’en now he cherisheth a tender hope;
He sees his rival prostrate in the dust,
So, as a man he hopes—because he must.
Can dark despair to love and hope give place
To save the guilty from deserved disgrace?
And were his worth so matchless, so divine,
As to forbear all ill to me and mine—
Still I must own the base, the coward hope,
’Gainst which my strength is all too weak to cope,
That hope whose phœnix ashes yet enthrall
The wretch who rises but once more to fall;
Ambition is my master, iron Fate,
I feel, obey, adore thee, while I hate!
Polyeucte was once my guard, my pride, my shield,
Yet can I, by Severus, weapons wield,
Should he my daughter wed, more tried, more true:
What will Severus—that will Decius do.
Upheld by him, e’en Fortune I defy—
And yet I shrink!—for them, thrice base were I!
*Albin.* Perish the word! It ne’er was made for thee,
But wilt thou deal just meed to treachery?
*Felix.* I go to Polyeucte’s cell,—though my poor breath
Should there be spent in vain to avert his death;
Then, then my fated child her strength shall try.
*Albin.* What wilt thou do if both he still defy?

*Felix.* O, press me not in agony so great!
To thee alone I turn—resistless Fate!

## ACT IV

Polyeucte. Cleon. *Three Other* Guards

*Poly.* What is thy will?
*Cleon.* Pauline would see my lord.
*Poly.* Ah, how my heart quails at that single word!
Thee, Felix, I o'ercame within my cell,
Laughed at thy threats if death and torture fell;
Yet hast thou still one arm to rouse my fears,
The rest I scorn, but dread thy daughter's tears!
One only talisman remains; Great God, 'tis mine,
Sufficient for my every need His strength divine!
O thou, dear saint, thy scars all healed, white-robed, in glory crowned,
Plead that I too may victory win, thou who hast victory found!
Nearchus, who hast clasped in Heaven that dear, that piercéd hand,
Plead that thy friend, who wrestles here, may safely by thee stand!
Ye Guards, one last kind service I would ask,
Well may ye grant it, 'tis an easy task:
I do not seek deliverance from these thralls,
[*Looks at his chains.*]
I do not care to scale my prison walls,
But, since three warriors armed can surely guard
One fettered man in safest watch and ward,—
Go one, and beg of great Severus' grace
That he would deign to meet me face to face;
To him would I a secret now impart,
Which much concerns his joy and peace of heart.
*Cleon.* On willing foot, my lord, do I obey.
*Poly.* Severus must this kindly service pay;
Ah, lose no time, time now has fleetest wings.
*Cleon.* Full soon to thee thy prayer Severus brings.
[*Exit* Cleon. Guardsmen *retire to background*
*Poly.* The fount is pure, yet bitter waters flow,
Sin taints—men poison what was made all fair.
They will not choose immortal streams: they go
To seek for pleasure—but find only care:
Their pleasure wed to strife—ah, death the gate of life,—
Christ's servants, none but they His crown shall wear!
So pain
Is gain:
Count not the cost!
The world well lost,
His Heaven to share!

O Pleasure, think not that I sigh for thee,
Thy charms, that once enslaved, no more delight;
In Christ's dear name I bid the tempter flee,
His foes are mine,—unlovely in my sight.
The mighty from their seat He hurls beneath His feet,
His fan is in His hand, His vengeful sword is bright.
Their crown
Cast down.
All hopes most dear
They cherish here
Shall end in night.

O Decius! Tiger! Pitiless! Athirst
With quenchless rage, for blood of Christ's redeemed—
Armenia shall arise, by thee accursed,
On her at last has Light of Asia beamed,
And our Deliverer from the holy east
Shall dash the cup from thy Belshazzar[1] feast!
Secure,
And pure,
Christ's saints shall reign,
And purged by pain,
For aye endure!

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[1] Belshazzar: See *Daniel*, V.

Let Felix sacrifice me to thine ire,
Yea, let my rival captivate the soul
Of her who now with Decius doth conspire
To chain immortal hope to earthly goal;
Let earth-bound men pursue the world's desire,
Sense charms not him who doth to Heaven aspire!
Hail pain!
Disdain
All Earthly love,
To seek above
A holier fire!

Oh, Love that passeth knowledge be my stay,
And fire my heart to beat alone for thee!
Sun of my soul?—oh, flash one purest ray
In that last hour supreme—to comfort me,
So life's brief night shall merge in endless day!
Come, Death!
Last breath
Shall praise thy name,
The same, the same,
For aye! For aye!

O heavenly fire, most pure, embracing all,
Come, shield me from Pauline, else must I fall!
I see her, but no more as once I saw—
I am encased in armour without flaw:
To eyes that gaze alone on heavenly light,
Naught else is pure, or dear, or fair, or bright!

*Enter* Pauline

With what intent, Pauline, hast thou come here?
Have I a friend to aid, or foe to fear?
Is it Christ's soldier that thou com'st to greet?
Or wouldst thou sink my triumph in defeat?
If thou wouldst bid me spurn the debt I owe,
Not Decius, but Pauline, my deadliest foe!

*Paul.* All, save thyself, to thee, my love, are friends:
Love but thyself, love me,—thy torment ends.
Alone thou seal'st thy doom, alone wouldst shed
That blood by all Armenia honouréd.
Yes, thou art saved, if thou for mercy plead;
Demand thy death, and thou are lost indeed.
Think of the worth of this self-hated life,
And think in pity of Pauline,—thy wife!
Think of the people that their prince adores,
Think of the honours Felix on thee pours!
Oh, I am nothing, nothing unto thee,
But, husband, think how dear thou art to me!
Think how the path of glory on thee opes,
Thou dearest lodestar of a nation's hopes!
Shall blood of kings be but the headsman's sport?
Is life a toy wherewith thy death to court?

*Poly.* I think of more than this; I know what thou wouldst say.
Our life is ours to use, and we that debt must pay.
What life is this men love? An idle, empty dream,
Where nothing can endure,—where all things only seem.
Death ends their every joy which fickle Fortune leaves,
They gain a royal throne to learn how pomp deceives;
They gather wealth that men may envy their estate,
They clear a path by blood, so envy turns to hate.
Such vast ambition mine as Cæsar never knew,—
Death bounds it not, for death is but its servant true.
Peace that the world ne'er gave, and cannot take away,—
That peace, Pauline, is mine, mine wholly, mine for aye!

Nor time, nor fate, nor chance, nor cruel war,
Can touch this peace, or this my kingdom mar.
Is this poor life—the creature of a day—
For endless peace too great a price to pay?
*Paul.* "Out on these Christian dreams!" my reason cries;
Whene'er they speak of truth, they utter lies.
Thou say'st: "To win such prize my life is naught!"
But is thy life thine own? How was it bought?
Our life an heirloom to our country due;
What gave thee birth, demands thy service too?
Pay, then, thy debt to her who has the right!
*Poly.* Ah, for my country I would gladly fight!
I know the glory of a hero's name,
I feel the thrill,—I recognise the claim.
My life I owe to whom I owe my sword—
But most to Him who gave it—to the Lord!
Oh, if to die for fatherland be sweet,
To die for Him—my God—what word is meet?
*Paul.* *Which* God?
*Poly.* Hush! hush! Pauline; the God who hears
And answers prayers,—gives hopes, assuages fears.
Thy gods are deaf and senseless, maimed and weak,
Tongues, mouths they have, and yet they cannot speak.
The Christians' God alone is mine,—is thine,
Jehovah only rules—supreme—divine!
*Paul.* Adore Him in thy heart, but say no word!
*Poly.* What! Can I call Jove and Jehovah—Lord?
*Paul.* One moment feign. Ah, let Severus go!
Let but my father all his kindness show!
*Poly.* Another Father mine! His love most dear
Removes me from a world begirt with fear.
For life's stern race too weak, too frail am I,
So, by kind death, He gives me Victory.
Pure from the holy font—(His mercies never fail!)
He brings His barque to port, when it hath scarce set sail.
Couldst thou but understand how poor this earth,
Couldst thou but grasp how great this second birth!
And yet, why speak of treasure rare concealed
From one to whom light is yet unrevealed?
*Paul.* O cruel, I can strangle pain no more!
Is this the fruit of all thy heavenly lore?
They say thy Christ His enemies did bless,
Thou addest insult to my deep distress.
How is my soul so dark—which was so fair?—
Thou call'dst me "lovely"—"dear"—"beyond compare!"—
Of my bereavement have I said no word,
I stilled my grief that I might soothe my lord!
They say that love has wings, and all they say is true,
For all thy love has flown; yet can I ne'er undo
The vows I made, the troth I plighted binds me still!
Thou fain wouldst quit thy wife, and thou shalt have thy will.
Oh, but to leave my side with rapture, ecstasy,
No jealous Christ can will: why grudge me one poor sigh?
This joy, this transport fierce, endeavour to conceal.
I do not share thy creed, but I, at least, can feel!
Why gloat o'er heavenly gain, crowns, palms, I know not what—
Where Polyeucte is blest, but where Pauline is not?
Soul, body, spirit, I am thy true wife, to own
That I am but a bar to happiness unknown!

*Poly.* Alas!
*Paul.* O! that "Alas!"—so faint, so tame!
Yet, if repentant from thy heart it came,
'Twould waken hope, still brief, and banish fears:
I wait the birth of thy reluctant tears.
*Poly.* These tears I shed! O, might the Spirit pour
Through them the light, the light that I adore—
Then were my only grief all swept away,
For thou wouldst join me in the realms of day!
Else Heaven itself would have its bitterness,
Should I look down to witness thy distress!
O God, who lov'st the dust on which Thy breath
Hath stamped Thine image true—save her from death!
The only death that kills, and let my love
From Heaven woo her to the realms above!
Lord, hear my call! My inmost heart now see,
Who lives a Christian life must Christian be!
Her nature god-like, stamped from print divine;
She must be sealed Thine own, yes, only Thine!
Say, must she burn, condemned to depths of hell?—
Thy Will be done—Who doest all things well!
*Paul.* O wretch, what words are these? Thou dost desire——
*Poly.* To snatch thee from a never-ending fire.
*Paul.* Or else?
*Poly.* O God, I trust to Thy control,
Who when we think not, canst illume the soul!
The when—the how—is His—here am I dumb,—
I wait—I wait!—That blesséd hour will come!
*Paul.* Oh, leave illusions! Love me!
*Poly.* Thee I love
Far more than self, but less than God above!
*Paul.* For love's dear sake, ah, listen to my prayer!
*Poly.* For love's dear sake—await the answer *there!*
*Paul.* To leave me here is naught! Thou wouldst seduce my soul!
*Poly.* Heaven is scarce Heaven for me, if thou reach not the goal.
*Paul.* O fancy-fooled!
*Poly.* Nay, led by heavenly light!
*Paul.* Thy faith is blindness!
*Poly.* Faith is more than sight!
*Paul.* Ah, death, strange rival to a wife's pure love!
*Poly.* This world our rival with the joys above!
*Paul.* Go, monster! woo thy death! Thou lov'dst me never!
*Poly.* Go, seek the world! and yet I love thee ever!
*Paul.* Yes, I will go—if absence bring relief—

*Enter* SEVERUS, FABIAN *and* GUARDS

Who comes to invade, ah, not to cure my grief?
Severus! Who could guess that thou wouldst show
Revenge unworthy o'er a prostrate foe?
*Poly.* Unworthy thee the thought, Pauline, for I
Severus called, and he hath heard my cry.
My importunity he will excuse,
My prayer I know that he will not refuse.
Severus—this—the treasure that was mine—
To thy most tender care I now resign:
To thee, as noblest man that I have known;—
Since earthly ties and joys I must disown.
The gift is worthy thee,—I know thy worth
Is great, but she no equal hath on earth.
My life, the bar,—my death the link shall be,—
Oh, grudge me not my dear brief ecstasy!

Oh, ease the heart that once was hers,—and guide
Her doubting footsteps to the Crucified!
This my last benison! All else is poor!
Await the promised light! Believe! Endure!
But words are vain!

[Polyeucte *signs to* Guards *to conduct him back to prison. Exeunt* Polyeucte *and* Guards

*Sev.* Most vain! No word have I
Such blindness must amaze! must stupify!
Nay, this is frenzy! I cannot conceive
A mind so strange! Mine ears cannot believe
That one who loved thee—yet, who would not love
A face that must the great immortals move?—
Blessed by thy heart!—Thy sweetest lips to taste!—
Then leave, refuse, spurn—yield with clamorous haste,
To yield a girl so dear—so pure—so fair!
And of that gift to make thy rival heir—
This beggars madness! Or the Christian bliss
Beyond man's soul to grasp! To spurn thy kiss!—
*We* treasure barter for a just exchange,
But to buy pain for thee! Pauline, 'tis strange!
Not thus, ye Gods! Severus had been blind
To perfect bliss—had Fortune been more kind—
The only heaven for me is in thine eyes,
These are my kings, these my divinities!
To me—for thee—were death with torture dear;
But to renounce thee!

*Paul.* Nay, I must not hear!
Thy words bring back the dear, the bygone days,
When I, a maid, might listen to thy praise:
Severus, thou must know my inmost heart;
I hear the knell bids Polyeucte depart.
He dies,—the victim of thine Emperor's laws,
And thou, though innocent, art yet the cause.
Oh, if thy soul, to thy desires a slave,
See hope emerging from my husband's grave—
Then will I wed with pain—despair embrace,—
But wed Severus? Never! 'Twere disgrace!
To light fresh torch from that pale, flickering fire—
Oh, bliss too monstrous! Thrice abhorred desire!
Back, hope! Back, happiness! The mate for me
When Polyeucte leaves my side—is Constancy!
Were this my will, were this, ye Gods, my fate—
To shame would memory turn, as love must yield to hate!
But generous art thou—most generous be!
His pardon will my father grant to thee.
He fears thee: more, if Polyeucte's life he take,
For thee he slays him—yes, 'tis for thy sake.
Christ died for man—let pagan virtue dim
His fame: plead for thy foe! so rival him!
No easy boon I ask, there needs a soul most rare;
But when the fight is fierce—then is the victory fair.
To help a man to be what thou wouldst be
Is triumph that belongs alone to thee!
Let this suffice thee: she, whom thou hast loved,
She, who by thy great love was not unmoved,
Of thee, and of no other dares to crave
That thou, Severus, shouldst my husband save!
Farewell! of this thy labour gauge the scope:
If thou art less than I yet dare to hope,
Then tell me not! all else Pauline can bear! [*Exit* Pauline

*Sev.* Where am I, Fabian? Has the crack of doom
Turned heaven to hell? made life a living tomb?

Nearer and dearer ever—but to go!
The prize within my grasp must I o'erthrow?
This—Fortune's brimming cup, with poison filled,
She bids me drain;—so new-born hope is killed.
Before I proffer aught, I am refused;
Thus sad, amazed, ashamed, in doubt, abused,
I see the ghost I laid, to life revive,
The more seductive still the more I strive.
Ah! must a woman, sunk in deep despair,
Teach me that shame is base, and honour fair?
And while I madly shriek, "O love, be kind!"
Pauline, death-stricken, keeps an equal mind!
O generous, but stern! Must these dear eyes,
Because I love them, o'er love tyrannise?
'Tis not enough to lose thee, I must give
My aid—to make my faithless rival live!
'Tis not enough: his death I would not plan,
But I must save him! bless where I would ban!
*Fab.* Ah, let the whole crew light one funeral pyre;
Yes, let the daughter perish with her sire!
This curs'd Armenia is one hornet's nest—
Crush all, then sail for Rome, ah! this were best!
She loves thee not. What canst thou hope to gain?
*Sev.* A glory that shall triumph over pain;
'Tis hers, and, by the Gods, it shall be mine!
Nor God nor fiend can sully such a shrine!
*Fab.* Speak low, for Jove has bolts, and Hell has ears!
The dangers of this course arouse my fears.
What? Decius implore a Nazarene to save!
'Tis death that hath thy heart; thou woo'st a grave.
His rage against the sect thou knowest well,
His power unbridled—his revenge is fell.
To plead for Christians is a task too great,
For man or God: thou rushest on thy fate.
*Sev.* Yes, such advice, I know, is much approved,
Yet not thus can Severus' soul be moved.
To Fate unequal—equal to myself—
In duty's path I go. For power and pelf
I never swerve where honour leads the way;
Come weal, come woe, her call I must obey.
Let fate depress an all unequal scale,
Let Clotho[1] hold her distaff—I'll not fail!
Yet one more word—this to thy private ear—
The fables that thou dost of Christians hear
Are fables only, coined, I know not why,
Distorted are they seen in Decius' eye.
They practise the black art,—so all men say.
I sought to learn the laws that they obey,
And to discover what the secret guilt
The which to expiate their blood is spilt.
Yet priests of Cybele[2] dark rites pursue
At Rome—untrammelled—this is nothing new:
To thousand gods men build, unchecked, their fanes,
The Christians' God alone our state disdains.
Each foul Egyptian beast[3] his temple rears,
Caligula[4] a god to Roman ears—
Tiberius[4] is enshrined—a Nero[4] deified—
To Christ—to Christ alone—a temple is denied!

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[1] Clotho: the youngest of the Three Fates, who spins the thread of life.

[2] Cybele: an Asiatic goddess, identified in Rome with *Rhea*, the Great Mother (*Magna Mater*). A temple to her stood on the Palatine in Rome.

[3] Egyptian beast: Egyptian deities were worshipped in Rome after the Second Punic War (218–210 B.C.).

[4] Caligula, Tiberius, Nero: Tyrannical and cruel emperors of the 1st century A.D.

Such metamorphoses confuse the mind
As gods in cats, and saints in fiends we find;
As Ruler absolute Jehovah stands,
Alone o'er heaven and earth and hell commands,
While pagan gods each 'gainst the other strive,
And ne'er one queen is found o'er all the hive,
Now—(strike me dead, Jove's tarrying thunderbolt!)
So many masters must provoke revolt.
And ah! where Christians live—there life is pure,
Vice dies untended, virtues all endure.
We give these men to rack, and cord, and flame,
While they forgive us—in their Pardoner's name.
They no sedition raise, they ne'er rebel,
Rome makes them soldiers, and they serve her well.
They rage in battle, faithful ward they keep,
They fight like lions, but they die like sheep.
They serve the State: Rome's servant must defend
Those who to might of Rome such succour lend.
Pauline, I will obey, whate'er befall;
The man who loseth honour loseth all.

## ACT V

### Felix. Albin. Cleon

*Felix.* Caught in Severus' net thy Felix see!
He hates and holds me—oh, the misery!
*Albin.* I see a generous man, who cries, "Forgive,
Let Pauline smile once more—let Polyeucte live!"
*Felix.* His soul thou canst not read—tho' noble heart he feigns.
The father he abhors—the daughter he disdains!
What Polyeucte won *he* sought: his suit denied,
Severus sues no more,—I know his pride.
His words, his prayers, his threats for Polyeucte plead,
His *tongue* says, "Listen, or be lost indeed!"
Unskilled the fowler who his snare reveals:
If at the bait I snatch—my doom is sealed:
Too plain, too coarse, this web for any fly—
Shall I this spider hail in my fatuity?
His wrath is wrath arranged, his generous fire is nursed,
That I, at Decius' hand, may meet the doom accurst,
If I should pardon grant—that grace my crime would be,
For he the spoil would reap of my credulity.
No simpleton am I, each promise to believe,
Words—oaths—are but the tools wherewith all men deceive;
Too oft escaped am I to be so lightly caught;
I know that words are wind. I know that wind is naught.
The trapper shall be trapped,—the biter shall be bit,
Unravelled is the web that he, poor fool, hath knit!
*Albin.* Jove! What a plague to thee is this mistrust!
*Felix.* Nay, those at court must fence; their weapons never rust;
If once thou yield the clue to thread the maze,
The sequence is most plain—the man betrayed betrays;
Severus, and his gifts, alike I fear!
If Polyeucte still to reason close his ear,
Severus' love is hate—his peace is strife—
First law of nature this, "Preserve thy life!"
*Albin.* Ah, let Pauline at least thy grace obtain!
*Felix.* If Decius grace withhold, my pardon vain!
And—far from saving this rebellious son—
Behold us all alike entrapped, undone!
*Albin.* Severus' promise——
*Felix.* He can never keep!
For Decius' rage and hatred never sleep:

If for that sect abhorred Severus plead,
He trebles loss—so are we lost indeed!
One only way is ours,—that way I try:
[*To* GUARDS] Bring Polyeucte and if he still defy,
Self-doomed, insensate, this my proffered grace,
He shall the death he wooes forthwith embrace!
*Albin.* Ah, this is stern!
*Felix.* ’Tis stern, ’tis just—as fate;
When justice drags a halting foot, too late,
She is not justice—for the vengeful mob
(Whose hearts for Polyeucte ne’er cease to throb),
Usurps her place, and, spurning curb and rein,
The felon crowns, and all our work is vain.
My sceptre trembles, and all insecure
Totters my crown,—a prey for every boor.
Then, swift, Severus hears the welcome news,
The jaundiced mind of Decius to abuse.
Shall I, the rabble’s lord, obey the rabble’s will?
*Albin.* Who ill in all around foresees,—but doubles ill.
Each prop thou hast is but a sword to pierce;
If Polyeucte hold their heart, the people fierce
Will gather fiercer courage from despair.
*Felix.* Death settles all; they’ll find no helper there,
And if—without a head—the body should rebel,
Convulsive throes I mock, and nerveless fury quell.
Whate’er ensues the Emperor must approve,
I shall have done my part, and win his love.
Here comes the man

*Enter* POLYEUCTE *and* SOLDIERS

I still must try to save;
If he repent—’tis well! If not—the grave!
[*To* POLYEUCTE.] Is life still hateful? Doth death still allure?
Is earth still naught? Do heavenly joys endure?
Doth Christ still counsel thee to hate thy wife;—
To sheathe thy sword,—to cast away thy life?
*Poly.* I never hated life, or wooed a grave;
To life I am a servant—not a slave.
Here service free I give upon this earth below,—
For higher service changed when to His Home I go.
Eternal life is this: to tread the path He trod;
To Him your body yield! Then trust your soul to God!
*Felix.* Yes, trust to an abyss of depth unknown!
*Poly.* No, trust to Holy Cross! That Cross my own!
*Felix.* The steep ascent, my son, I too would climb,
Yes, I would Christian be,—but—give me time,—
By Jove! I’ll tread thy path! This my desire,
Else at thy hand the judge may me require!
*Poly.* Nay, laugh not, Felix! He thy Judge will be,
No refuge there for impious blasphemy!
Nor kings nor clowns can ’scape His righteous ire,
His slaughtered Saints of thee will He require!
*Felix.* I’ll slay no more;—by Hercules I swear!
So I a Christian crown perchance may wear;
I will protect the flock!
*Poly.* Nay, rather be
A goad, a scourge, for their felicity!
Let suffering purify each Christian soul,
Cross, rack, and flame but lead them to their goal;
What here they lose—in Heaven an hundredfold they find.
Be cruel,—persecute!—and so alone be kind!

My words thou canst not read; thine eyes are blinded here,
Wait the unveiling *There!* Then understand and fear!
*Felix.* Nay, nay, in truth I would a Christian be!
*Poly.* In thy hard heart alone a bar I see.
*Felix* [*whispering*]. This Roman knight——
*Poly.* [*aloud*]. Severus, thou wouldst say.
*Felix.* Once let him sail, I will no more delay,
For this I anger feign;—let him depart!
*Poly.* 'Tis thus thou wouldst reveal a Christian heart?
To idols dumb—to Pagans blind, thy sugared poison bear,
Christ's servants quaff another cup, sure refuge from despair.
*Felix.* What is this deadly draught that thou wouldst drain?
I'll drink thy wine.—Till then, from death refrain!
*Poly.* To swine no more my holy pearls I cast,
Faith,—*faith*—not reason, shall see light at last;
Soon—when I see my God—yes, face to face,
I will implore that Felix may find grace.
*Felix.* O dearest son, thy loss were death to me!
*Poly.* This loss can be repaired—the remedy
Find in Severus; he will take my place;
By Decius honoured he will not disgrace
Thy house: my death will an advantage win
For thee, for her, for me.—The work begin!
*Felix.* Such my reward! Yes, insult is the child
Of injury. The grace I grant, reviled,
Shall turn to swift revenge. The gods defied
May do their will and speed the suicide!
*Poly.* I thought the gods were dead, but they revive
With human passion; Felix, do not strive
Against thy nature; lay aside thy ruth;
Who loves a lie can never follow truth.
*Felix.* I humoured madness, but the mood is o'er,
I am myself again; I did implore,—
'Twas vain; the dark abyss that yawns for thee
May hold thee now, tomb to thy constancy.
The hope I cherished—fondled—now is flown,
Severus will be king, and I o'erthrown;—
Shall I the gods by incense pacify?
Or by thy death? for thou, at last, must die!
*Poly.* Incense might but incense; I cannot tell:

*Enter* PAULINE

Pauline!
*Paul.* That word broke from thee like a knell;
Who seeks my doom to-day? Thou—or my sire?
Who fires the brand? Who lights the funeral pyre?
My father should, by nature, be my friend,
And lover's heart to love an ear should lend.
Who here is mine ally, and who my foe?
Who has a heart to feel?—this would I know.
*Felix.* Nay, to thy lord appeal.

PAULINE *turns to* POLYEUCTE.

*Poly.* Severus wed!
*Paul.* Ah, this is outrage! Rather strike me dead!
*Poly.* Oh, dearer than myself to me thy weal!
My love would never wound, it seeks to heal.
I see thee wrestle with thy deep distress
Alone—unless Severus bring redress;
His merit, that once gained thy maiden heart,
Hath still that worth when I from thee must part,—
Once loved—and loving still—his honour grows.
*Paul.* Thy wife's true heart another treatment owes:

O base reproach! For this I crushed for thee
My former love: that I disdained might be?
This my reward for dearest victory won,—
I did that love undo—to be myself undone!
Resolve, faith, abnegation, all were vain,
For thy return is outrage heaped on pain.
Oh, sunk in tomb of shame, most vile, most mean,
Come back to life—to honour—to Pauline!
[*Holds out her arms.*]
To learn from her that loyalty and faith
Religion are:—and all beside but death!
Once more Alcestis[1] wrestles with the tomb,
Arise, arise from thy enthralling doom!
And if my invocation feeble be,
Regard the tears—the sighs,—shed—breathed for thee!
Love is too weak a word—I thee adore!

*Poly.* Once have I said—yet now I say once more—
"Live with Severus, or—with Polyeucte die!"
Thy tears are mine, and thy pure constancy
I share: But—I am soldier of the Cross!
Take up thine own, and count all gain but loss!
Pauline—no more! [*To* FELIX.] Thy slumbering wrath rewake!
Thy fates and furies wait! Their vengeance slake!

*Paul.* His life is saved! These fetters all undo!—
For justice never yet a madman slew;
And he is mad,—but, father, thou art sane,
And thou, his father, must his friend remain.
A father cannot less than father be,
Oh, be to him what thou hast been to me!
But cast upon thy child a kinder eye,—
Slay him?—Then know that *I* am doomed to die!
But even if justly done to death were he,
The sentence wrong that, with him, slayeth me.
For double death would double wrong present,
And slay the guilty with the innocent.
'Twas thou didst link us closely hand in hand,
"To live in bliss together" thy command.
Oh, shall the will that both our lives did bless
Doom both these lives to death—to nothingness?
When lips are sealed to lips, and heart to heart,
'Tis tyranny, not law, such love to part.
Oh, not a tyrant, but a father be,
Forgive,—give back—restore my love to me!

*Felix.* Dear child, thy father is thy father still,
Nothing hath parted us, and nothing will.
My heart is tender, and it beats for thee:
Against this madman let us joinéd be.
O wretched man, hast thou no eyes to see, no heart to feel?
Thy guilt, thy crime, I would efface, thy pardon I would seal,
*For* thee my daughter cannot die—say, must she die *with* thee?
A victim to the only sin which ne'er can pardoned be.
O sight most strange! Here at thy knees as suppliant I sue!
[FELIX *kneels.*]
The evil that thyself hast wrought—that ill thyself undo!

*Poly.* Arise, old man, from knees unused to bend,
Or to another ear petition send!
This artifice befits nor me nor thee,
To beg of one twice threatened!—Mockery!
First, by thy hand Nearchus felt the flame,
Then love, forsooth, thy plea—(profanéd name!)

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[1] Alcestis: When Admetus, King of Thessaly, was on the point of death, the gods relented and gave him back life provided he could find some one to meet death in his place. After all others had refused, horror-struck, Alcestis, his wife, offered herself as his substitute. (See Euripides's *Alcestis*.)

The path of Christian neophyte hast thou trod,
And, in God's name, hast mocked Almighty God!
Earth, heaven, and hell in turn have been thy tool,
And him thou hast traduced thou wouldst befool!
Go, — bully — flatterer — liar! — Every part
Thou playest, while delay doth break my heart!
Enough of dallying! While thou dost dissolve
Thy feeble soul in doubt, hear my resolve:
The God who made me—Him will I adore;
He holds my plighted faith,—and evermore
He works salvation for his ransomed race—
Who gave His Son to death that we might life embrace;
And this—Christ's sacrifice—continued day by day,
The Christ reveals and pleads—The Life—The Truth—The Way!
No more His mysteries to self-stopped ears
Will I disclose—(he heedeth not nor hears.) [*Pointing to* Felix.]
Pray then to these thy gods of wood and stone,—
To gods who every deed of crime enthrone,
Who boast their malice, and their foul incest,
Vaunt theft and murder—all that we detest.
This, their example,—Pagan—follow thou!
To Pluto bend, to Aphrodite bow!
For this I broke their altars, rased their shrine,—
Yea, for those crimes that thou dost call divine!
And what I did, that would I do once more
Before Severus—Decius,—nay, before
The eyes of all men;—so would I proclaim
One God alone adored,—one Holiest Name!

*Felix.* At last my bounties yield to wrath most stern, most just.
Die! or the gods adore!
*Poly.* A Christian I!
*Felix.* Thou must
Adore the gods I say! Adore, or die!
*Poly.* I am a Christian.
*Felix.* This is thy reply?
Ye Guards, do my behest—prepare the knife!
*Paul.* Where goes he?
*Felix.* To his death!
*Poly.* Ah, no to life!
[*To* Pauline.] Remember me! Farewell, Pauline, farewell!
*Paul.* Nay, I will follow thee—to heaven or hell!
*Felix.* Begone! For all our ills this one redress!
[*Exeunt* Pauline, Polyeucte *and* Guards

*Enter* Albin

O task ungrateful to my gentle mind!
Well did he say, "Be cruel to be kind!"
The people I defy, ah, let them rage!
Severus may in war of words engage.
Yes, I have saved myself—I mean *the State,*
To wilful man there comes relentless fate;
My conscience pure of all reproach,—for I
Have lied and stormed to shake his constancy.
To give his hot young blood due time to cool
I played the coward—nay, I played the fool!
Why did he thus assail the gods and me
With insult, and with horrid blasphemy?
But interest helped me, and resentment too.
Else had I found my duty hard to do!
*Albin.* Soon mayst thou this thy dear-bought victory rue,
For thou hast done what thou canst ne'er undo!
Unworthy deed for Roman knight! ah, me!
[*Aside.*]
I would that I could add, "unworthy *thee!*"

*Felix.* Manlius and Brutus[1] both a son have slain,
And neither did thereby his glory stain;
The part that is diseased—that part we bleed,
So is the State from knaves and caitiffs freed.
*Albin.* Revenge and pressing peril thee unman,
Else—couldst thou bless a deed all men must ban?
When she, thy widowed daughter, comes—the air
Of heaven will echo to her deep despair!
*Felix.* Thou dost remind me she with Polyeucte went—
I know not with what mind, with what intent:
But her despair awakes my fond alarm,
Go, Albin, go, and guard my child from harm!
She might the execution of the law
Impede: I would not that his death she saw.
Try to console her—Go! what dost thou fear?

*Enter* PAULINE

*Albin.* I need not go, for ah—Pauline is here!
*Paul.* Tyrant, why leave thy butchery half done?
Come, slay thy daughter, thou hast slain thy son!
For, hear!—His villainy—or worth—is mine!
Why stay thy hand while I my neck incline?
Thy sword in me shall find a kindred food,
I too am new baptized, baptized in blood!
These drops that fell from off the murderous knife,
Have made the martyr's widow a true wife.
I see!—I feel!—I know! My darkest night
Is o'er—to break in purest heavenly light.
I too, at last, am Christ's: that word says all,
Those hands were pierced for me—I hear His call:
Death—lovely death—thy beckoning hand I hail!
Oh, help my passage, or thy schemes may fail!
Dread Decius! Fear Severus! Fear thy fall!
Oh, speed me to my lord—my love—my all!
My husband calls me to his happier land—
See!—there Nearchus at his side doth stand!
Lead me to these—the gods by thee confest;
Some shrines spared Polyeucte; I will break the rest!
There, there the gods thou fearest I will brave;
Oh, bare thy knife!—no other gift I crave.
*Thou* hast my master been: another Lord
Claims my obedience now; yes, raise thy sword!
Revolt is holy when for Christ we fight,—
My day has dawned, the day that knows no night!
Once more I cry—"Christ only has my heart!"
Thy bliss and mine secure! Let me depart!
Keep thou thy kingdom! Safe its treasure hold!
*My* kingdom *there*—with Christ—within the fold!

*Enter* SEVERUS

*Sev.* Unnatural sire, whose craft leads to the grave,
The slaves of fear themselves alone enslave.
Yes, Polyeucte is slain, and slain by thee,—
A sacrifice to greed and treachery.
I offered rescue from the opening tomb,
Base doubts enthralled thee, thou didst seal his doom;
I prayed, I threatened, thou wouldst not believe,
Deceiver thou, so must all men deceive.

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[1] Manlius . . . Brutus: *Manlius Torquatus*, when consul, condemned his own son to death in 340 B.C. for engaging in single combat in a battle with the Latins, contrary to the orders of the consuls.
*Lucius Junius Brutus* (about 501 B.C.) condemned his sons to death for entering into a conspiracy to restore the Tarquins and overthrow the newly established Republic of Rome.

Thou thoughtst me coward, liar—thou shalt see
All oaths Severus swears fulfilled shall be.
Poor moth! I might have saved thee—nay, I planned to save,
Thy perfidy the torch that marks thee for the grave.
Drench earth in blood,—for Jove pour forth malignant zeal,
The strokes that thou hast dealt redoubled shalt thou feel!
I go: the storm shall break o'er this devoted land,
From Jove the bolt?—maybe—but I direct his hand.
*Felix.* Why lags that hand? A willing victim I,
I choose to suffer for my perfidy;
My doubts, my fears unworthy, all I own,
I have offended—let my death atone.
Take thou my honours, their poor lustre thine;
I kneel before another, nobler shrine.
The Power that moved me, groping through the night
Of wrong and darkness, wafts me to The Light!
I slew thee, Polyeucte, but thy pardoning hand
Shall guide thy murderer to the better land!
He prays for me, and by his sacrifice,
New-born upon his ashes I arise.
[*To* PAULINE.] Raised by his death from out the grave of sin,
Thou tread'st the path thy father shall begin;
By me his martyr-crown, as all my bliss
By him. His Christ is mine, and I am his;
O, blessed Christian vengeance! All my loss
Is turned to gain by the redeeming Cross!
Now, Pauline, am I thine, a Christian I,
That Death gives life by which alike we die!
[*To* SEVERUS.] Then slay us both! Behold a willing prey!
*Paul.* [*to* FELIX]. Yes, mine for ever now! Hail, glorious day,
That sees earth's loss transformed to endless gain!
*Felix.* The gain, the glory, Christ's! By Him we reign.
*Sev.* Now am I dumb, some miracle is here;
Their courage and their faith must I revere;
We slay them; yet, like Cadmus' seed, new-born
They sprout afresh, and laugh our scythe to scorn.
We give them cord and flame, they torture hail;
Friends fail them, but themselves they never fail.
We mow them down, fresh nurslings to unbare,
What moves the seed lies hid, but *it is there.*
They bless the world, though by the world accurst,
Their shield am I—let Decius do his worst.
I yet may own their power, though now my will
That each to his own gods be faithful still,
Let each still search for truth, and truth adore.
[*To* FELIX.] A Christian thou? Then fear my wrath no more,
Thy sect I cherish; this their awful cult
Severus will protect, but ne'er insult.
Keep thou thy power from Roman sword secure,
So long as loyalty with faith endure;
I swear it: ay, the Emperor shall learn
The guiltless from the traitor to discern;
His persecution baseless as his fear.
*Felix.* Severus—thou who hast the hearing ear,—
Freeman of Rome—God's Spirit grant thee grace
To be Christ's Freeman, and behold His face:
To these—Christ's martyrs—earth's last rites be given,
Earth, guard their ashes as a trust for Heaven!
Earth hides their dust. When envious time is o'er,
That dust shall wake to life for evermore!

### RACINE

**Jean Racine** (1639–1699), thirty years younger than Corneille, and his great rival, found the conventions of French tragedy established when he began his career as a dramatist, and accepted them unconditionally. He had, in fact, been bred a thorough classicist under the strict discipline of the Jansenist school at Port Royal, near Paris. When, however, in 1658 he entered the Collège d'Harcourt in Paris, he troubled his family by embarking upon a gay social life, and beginning a literary career with an ode for the marriage of Louis XIV, which, incidentally, won him both royal favor and bounty. To rescue the youthful poet from such worldly distractions, his relatives sent him down into the country in the south of France to study for the priesthood under the care of an uncle. There Racine spent two years most profitably in perfecting his knowledge of literature, both ancient and modern, so that when he returned to Paris in 1663, he was accepted into literary and court circles. La Fontaine, Molière, Boileau, were his friends, and Louis XIV his patron.

Racine's first accepted play, *La Thébaïde,* based on the story of the strife between Antigone's two brothers, was produced by Molière in June, 1664, at the Palais Royal. In December of the same year Molière put on the young poet's second tragedy, *Alexandre le Grand.* When, however, within twelve days the same play was unexpectedly performed by the tragedians of the Hôtel de Bourgogne apparently by Racine's own arrangement, Molière broke off their friendship. By this time also, Racine's established reputation as a dramatist brought remonstrances from his old friends and teachers at Port Royal, whose Puritanical principles denounced the theatre and all its works. Racine's satiric reply completed the estrangement.

During the next ten years Racine wrote eight plays, all tragedies but one, that aroused Paris to an enthusiasm it had not known since the performances of *The Cid.* These dramas were based on Greek or Latin stories. The greatest are *Andromaque* (1667) and *Phèdre* (1677). The others are: *Les Plaideurs* (1668), an Aristophanic comedy; *Brittanicus* (1669); *Bérénice* (1670); *Bajazet* (1672); *Mithridate* (1673); *Iphigénie* (1674).

When at the time of the presentation of *Phèdre* a cabal, led by his enemies at court, procured the success of a rival poet's play on the same subject, Racine abandoned the theatre, and changed his whole mode of life. He married, settled down, became reconciled with the Port Royalists, and devoted his pen to his work as historiographer to Louis XIV. Thereafter he led a pleasant life: a courtier, yet devout; rich and famous, yet domestic. In 1685 he pronounced a eulogy on his old rival Corneille, in the French Academy of which he had been a member since 1673.

Twelve years after *Phèdre,* at Madame de Maintenon's request, Racine wrote two tragedies, based on biblical stories, for the girls of her school at St. Cyr to act. These were *Esther* (1689) and *Athalie* (1691), the latter often ranked as his supreme work. Both are modeled closely upon Greek tragedies, even to the chorus.

Racine focuses the interest in his plays upon a psychological analysis of character. Like the Greeks he selects a single situation, a human problem to be solved, and depicts the emotions and interplay of character which it involves. The tragic conflict is in the heart of a woman who passes through the varying passions of love, jealousy, hate, or remorse. Consequently his characters are more human in their weaknesses and spiritual conflicts than are those of Corneille. To this simplicity of plot Racine adds simplicity of style; his language is unadorned, lucid, harmonious, and subtle. This very naturalness, which is pure art, is strangely moving, especially when interpreted by a great actress.

With the death of Racine at the turn of the century, the splendid period of classicism in French drama came to an end.

# BERENICE

(Bérénice)

RACINE

*1670*

Translated by John Masefield[1]

### PERSONS

TITUS[2]
BERENICE[3]
ANTIOCHUS[4]
PAULINUS[5]
ARSACES[6]
PHENICE[7]
RUTILIUS[8]
Retinue of TITUS

*The scene is at Rome in a room which is between the apartment of Titus and that of Berenice.*

[*The subject of Berenice was suggested to Racine and Corneille independently by the Princess Henriette, daughter of Charles I of England and wife of the younger brother of Louis XIV. As the theme was better suited to Racine's talents than to Corneille's, the younger poet's play was superior to the* Tite et Bérénice *of his older rival.*

*Racine has refined the character of the historical Berenice. She was the daughter of Herod Agrippa I, King of Judea, and was born about 28 A.D.; the date of her death is uncertain. Titus Flavius Sabinus Vespasianus, Roman Emperor from 79–81 A.D., was born in 40 or 41, and died in 81. Titus first met the Jewish Queen when he went to aid his father Vespasian in the war in Judea. Titus was left to carry on the siege of Jerusalem, which he accomplished in 70 A.D. Berenice followed him to Rome in 75. He dismissed her in 79 after he became Emperor.* Editor's note.]

## ACT I

*Antiochus.* Let us stay here a moment. I can see
That all this stately palace is unknown
To you, Arsaces.
This lonely room is where the Emperor comes
To find some quiet from the cares of Court.
Here sometimes, too, he comes to see the Queen:
The Queen's apartments lie beyond that door.
And now, Arsaces, go to see the Queen,
And tell her that I beg that she will grant
What I dare ask, some secret words with me.
Say I regret to be importunate.
*Arsaces.* You, Lord, importunate? You, her faithful friend;
You, generously careful of her interests;
You, that Antiochus who loved her once,
One of the greatest Kings in all the East![9]
Even if she be about to marry Titus,
Does that put such a distance 'twixt you two?
*An.* No. Go, my friend. Mind not those other matters;
See if I may but speak with her alone.
[*Exit* ARSACES

Alas, Antiochus! Can I ever dare
To tell the Queen I love her? Why, I tremble

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[1] All performing rights in *Berenice* in every country are strictly reserved by Mr. Masefield, to whom all applications should be addressed, care of the publishers.

[2] **Titus:** Emperor of Rome.

[3] **Berenice:** Queen of Palestine.

[4] **Antiochus:** King of Comagena.

[5] **Paulinus:** Confidant of Titus.

[6] **Arsaces:** Confidant of Antiochus.

[7] **Phenice:** Confidant of Berenice.

[8] **Rutilius:** A Roman.

[9] **greatest . . . East:** King of Comagena, a province in Asia Minor, in the northeast district of Syria, between the Taurus mountains and the Euphrates. It was friendly to Rome; and Antiochus had, in fact, been a Roman ally in the siege of Jerusalem.

Already, and my agitated heart
Now fears the moment it so much desired.
Queen Berenice has left me without hope;
She ordered me never to speak of love.
Five years I have been silent, five long years,
Hiding my love under a veil of friendship.
And now to-day I have to speak with her.
Titus, they say, is marrying her to-day.
But can I think that she whom Titus plans
To make his Empress, will be kind to me
More than she was of old in Palestine?
Titus is marrying her, and at the altar
I come to tell her that I love her too.
What good can come to me from telling her?
Ah! I must go and not displease her thus.
I will withdraw, and go, and without speaking
Pass far away from her—forget her—die.
[*Pause.*]
I cannot always suffer from such torment,
Nor shed these secret tears unknown to her
And lose her, through the fearing her displeasure.
Oh, lovely Queen, and why should you be vexed?
I do not come to beg you not to marry;
I do not come to beg that you should love me,
Ah! woe is me! I only come to say
That now, even now,
After so long being certain that my rival
Would find some fatal drawback to his marriage,
I find that I was wrong; that all can be,
And that your marriage now is being prepared.
Oh, sad example of long constancy!
After five years of love and empty hope
I am still faithful, though I hope no longer.
She could not blame me, she will pity me.
Whatever happens I will speak to her.
Alas! what can a hopeless lover fear,
Having resolved to see her face no more?

*Enter* ARSACES

Can I go in, Arsaces?
*Ar.* Lord, I have seen the Queen—
I only pierced the crowd with difficulty;
She is surrounded with adoring people
Drawn to her palace by her coming greatness.
Titus has ceased his mourning for his father[1]
And takes to wooing, and the rumour goes
That before night the happy Berenice
Will change the title "Queen" for that of "Empress."
*An.* Alas!
*Ar.* But how can such news trouble you?
*An.* So, then, I cannot speak alone with her?
*Ar.* Lord, you will see her. She has been informed
That you would see her here at once alone.
She granted your desire with a look,
And doubtless waits a favourable moment
To escape the crowds of courtiers that surround her.
*An.* Enough. And those important orders given—
Have you fulfilled them?
*Ar.* Lord, you know my zeal.
There are some ships prepared in Ostia[2] harbour
Ready to sail the instant you command;
But whom do you intend to send in them?
*An.* One can but go when I have seen the Queen.
*Ar.* Who can but go?
*An.* Myself.
*Ar.* You, King Antiochus?
*An.* Yes, when I leave this palace,
I shall leave Rome, Arsaces, and for ever.
*Ar.* I am surprised, and justly. What great King,
After Queen Berenice has kept you here
For three long years, far from your State, in Rome;[3]

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[1] **his father:** The Emperor Vespasian (69–79 A.D.). Titus had been associated with his father as virtual Emperor for nine years; and had just been made Emperor in fact upon Vespasian's death in 79 A.D.

[2] **Ostia:** The harbor of Rome, 15 miles southwest of Rome, at the mouth of the Tiber. It was the seaport to Greece and all of the East.

[3] **three . . . Rome:** Berenice went to Rome in 75 A.D. She resided in the imperial palace.

Now, when she needs your presence at her marriage,
When her great lover, Titus, marrying her,
Prepares such glory for her!
*An.* Arsaces, leave this talk, it troubles me:
Let her enjoy her fortune.
*Ar.* Ah, my Lord,
Her coming glory makes the Queen forget you,
And enmity succeeds friendship betrayed?
*An.* Not so. I never hated the Queen less.
*Ar.* What then? Has the new Emperor grown proud
Since his accession, and been cold to you?
Does any feeling of his change of mind
Drive you to go from Rome?
*An.* Titus has never seemed the colder to me.
I should be wrong to make complaint.
*Ar.* Why go, then?
What fancy makes you your own enemy?
Heaven raises to the throne a Prince who loves you,
A Prince who saw you in the war seek death
Or glory, in his steps; whose princely courage,
Helped by yourself, subdued the rebel Jews.
The Prince remembers well the famous day
Which ended the long siege.[1] Do you remember?
The enemy quiet in their triple rampart,
Watching unharmed our impotent attacks,
And you advancing with the scaling ladders,
Carrying death among them up the walls?
That was the day, the day you were near death,
The day when Titus found you almost dead,
Bleeding from many wounds, and kissed you there
As the most gallant man in the forlorn.
Now, sir, you ought to wait for your reward
For all your blood shed then. If you must go
Back to your kingdom, go not unrewarded,
Wait till Imperial Cæsar sends you back
Laden with honours as the friend of Rome.
Can nothing change your mind? You do not answer.
*An.* What would you have me say?
I want one moment's speech with Berenice.
*Ar.* Well, Lord?
*An.* Her fate will settle mine.
*Ar.* And how?
*An.* I wish to hear her speak about her marriage.
If she admits the rumour to be true,
If it be true that she will marry Cæsar,
If Titus makes her Empress, I shall go.
*Ar.* What makes this marriage so distasteful to you?
*An.* When we have gone, I'll tell you.
*Ar.* I am troubled.
*An.* Here is the Queen. Good-bye; do as I bade.

*Enter* BERENICE *and* PHENICE

*Berenice.* At last I can escape the importunity
Of all the crowds of friends whom fortune makes me.
I come from all their tedious acclamation
To find a friend who speaks out of his heart;
And I have been impatient, for I thought
You had neglected me.
I said of old that good Antiochus
Was constant in his loving care for me;
He was my friend in good or evil fortune;
And now to-day, when the gods seem to give me
Honours which I would gladly share with him,
This same Antiochus hides from my sight
And leaves me to an unknown crowd alone.

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[1] **long siege:** The famous siege of Jerusalem, begun by Vespasian and carried on by Titus, who finally captured the city on September 8, 70 A.D. The Arch of Titus, erected the same year in Rome, commemorates the event.

*An.* Then is it true, this that the rumour says,
That marriage is to end the long, long courtship?
*Ber.* Lord, these last days have been most sorrowful;
For this long mourning that the Emperor kept,[1]
Had kept him from me, and his love seemed changed
From those old days when he was always with me.
Now he is silent, troubled, ever weeping,
His only speeches seem like sad farewells;
So you can judge of my anxiety.
*An.* Now his first tenderness has come again?
*Ber.* You saw last night how his religious cares
Were backed by solemn vote, when in full house
The Senate ranked his Father with the gods?[2]
His pious mourning now gives place to love,
To thought for her he loves. At the same time,
Not even telling me of his intention,
He called the Senate, and by proud decree
Enlarged the frontiers of my Palestine,
Joining to it Arabia and Syria.
And if I can believe the voice of friends
And his own promises so often given,
He means to crown me Queen of that expanse,
To add to all my titles that of Empress;
And he is coming here to tell me this.
*An.* And I come here to say good-bye for ever.
*Ber.* What are you saying? Good-bye?
And your face changes.
*An.* Madam, I have to go.
*Ber.* And not say why?
*An.* No; I must go and see her face no more.
*Ber.* Speak, Lord! What is the mystery of your going?
*An.* Then listen to me for the last, last time.
Lady, if in your high degree of glory
You ever think about your childhood's home,
You may remember that I saw you there
And loved you.
You may remember, too, how once your brother,
Agrippa[3], spoke for me, and it may be,
Perhaps, you were not vexed to hear I loved you.
Then, to my sorrow, Titus came: he saw you,
He pleased you, for of course he came before you
In all the splendour of a man who bears
The vengeances of Rome in his two hands,
Making Judæa pale.
I think that I was one of those first conquered;
And then it came to pass that your own lips
Told me to speak no more of love to you.
And yet I hoped; a long, long time I hoped,
Following like your shadow in the palace.
And then you made me promise, made me swear
Never to speak again of love to you.
But when you made me swear, my heart knew well
That I could only love you till I die.
*Ber.* You must not say this.
*An.* It is five years since I said anything;
And after this I shall be silent always.
And then I went with Titus to the wars,
Hoping to die, or hoping at the least
That deeds of mine might make you hear my name.
And we were at the war, Titus and I;
All that I did was far surpassed by him.
I came behind in war, even as in love.
Then, when the war and the long siege were over,
And the last pale and bloody-featured rebels
Came from their burnt-out ruins and their hunger,

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[1] long . . . kept: See line 63, (page 334).

[2] Senate . . . gods: Roman Emperors were deified by the Senate.

[3] Agrippa: Agrippa II, King of Judea. See ACTS XXV, 13–27 and XXVI, 1–32.

He came in triumph home, and you with him.
I stayed behind, and went from place to place,
Where you had been, where I had worshipped you;
But my despair drove me to follow you,
And Titus welcomed me and brought me here.
And then I hoped—always I had some hope—
That something here might make a way for me.
But now my fate's fulfilled; your glory comes.
There will be plenty here to pray for you,
To watch your glorious crowning, without me.
I could not bring rejoicing, only tears,
So I shall go, loving you more than ever.
*Ber.* I did not think that on my marriage day
Any man's son would dare make love to me.
I will forget all that. I'll say farewell.
God knows that in the honours coming to me
I hoped that you would watch my happiness,
Because, like all the world, I honoured you,
And Titus loved you, and you admired Titus.
You are like Titus, and a hundred times
I have been pleased to see your likeness to him.
*An.* Yes, that is why I go. I go too late.
Would I had gone before, and spared myself
This news of Titus and the grief it causes,
Then I should not have heard you speak his name
Nor known your love for him, but gone, and seen
No more your eyes, which see me every day
Yet cannot notice me.
Good-bye. I go. My heart's too full to speak;
I know that I shall love you till I die.
Fear not that I shall talk of my misfortune,
But if you hear that I am dead, then think
That once I was alive. Good-bye. Good-bye. [*Exit*

*Phenice.* Oh, how I pity him! Such faithfulness
Deserved more luck, good Lady. Don't you pity him?
*Ber.* His going so
Leaves me, I grant you, with a troubled mind.
*Phen.* I would have kept him back.
*Ber.* I keep him back?
No; rather would I lose the memory of him.
Could I encourage such a senseless love?
*Phen.* Titus has not yet spoken out his mind.
Rome looks upon you with most jealous eyes,
Lady, the rigour of the Roman laws
Makes me afraid for you.
Romans can marry none but Roman women.[1]
Rome hates all royalty, and you are Queen.
*Ber.* Phenice, the time for terror is gone by,
And Titus loves me. He is all-powerful.
If he but speak, the Senate will salute him
And crown his statues with the flowering laurel.
Have you not seen the splendours of to-night?
The torches, and the lamps and bonfires burning;
The Eagles of the Army standing ranked;
The crowd of Kings, the Consuls and the Senate,
All lending all their glory to my lover.
Purple and gold and laurels for his victory,
And all those eyes from every land on earth
Staring on him alone with greedy looks,
Watching that splendid port, that gentle presence.
Oh, with what awe and with what gladness too,

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[1] **Romans . . . women:** After the expulsion of the seventh and last King of Rome, Tarquin the Proud, c. 510 B.C., the Romans established a republic and swore never again to be ruled by kings.

All of those hearts assure him of their faith!
Can one see this not thinking as I think,
That even if he had been obscurely born,
The world would still have known him as its King?
Now, while all Rome is making prayer for Titus,
And offers sacrifice for the new reign,
Let us too go and offer prayer for him.
Then I will go to him, and we shall speak
All that our full hearts hold for one another.

CURTAIN

## ACT II

TITUS. PAULINUS

*Titus.* Has no one seen the King of Comagena,
Or does he know that I await him here?
*Paulinus.* Sir, I have seen the Queen.
The King of Comagena had been with her,
But had gone out shortly before I came.
I have left word to warn him of your orders.
*Tit.* Enough. What was the Queen doing?
*Paul.* Sir, she was going out
To pray the gods for your prosperity.
*Tit.* Too kind Princess alas!
*Paul.* Prince, why be sad for her?
Half of the Eastern world will now be hers.
You pity her?
*Tit.* Paulinus, let all leave you here with me. [*Exit* GUARDS

Alas! Rome is uncertain of my plans
And waits to know the fortunes of the Queen.
The secrets of her heart and mine, Paulinus,
Are now the talk of all the earthly world.
Now the time comes, I must explain myself.
What do they say about the Queen and me?
Speak; what do you hear?
*Paul.* I hear on every side
About your virtue, Emperor, and her beauty.
*Tit.* What do they say about my love for her?
What do they expect from it?
*Paul.* You can do what you please—love—cease to love;
The Court will think as you and take your part.
*Tit.* Yes, I have seen that Court, and close at hand,
That Court too careful to applaud its Master;
I've seen that Court approve the crimes of Nero,
Go on their knees to him, and consecrate him.
Idolatrous courtiers shall not be my judge;
I will not lend my ear to flatterers.
I wish to know, from you, what people say.
You promise this. Respect and fear for me
Keep all complaints from coming to my ears.
Now, dear Paulinus, let me see and hear;
Be you my ears and eyes, interpret for me
The varying hearts of all my countrymen;
Let your sincerity bring truth to me
Across all lies, beyond all flattery.
Now speak! What ought Queen Berenice to hope?
Will Rome be cruel or indulgent to her?
Will Rome be angry if so fair a Queen
Be raised as Empress to the throne of Cæsar?
*Paul.* Lord, there can be no doubt, whate'er the cause,
Be it reason or caprice, Rome does not want her
To be the Empress here. They say, of course,
That she is good and beautiful, and seems
Made to be Empress over human beings;
They say she has a truly Roman heart,
And has a thousand virtues; but, my Lord,
You know the rest. Rome, by unchanging law,

Will have no foreign blood mixed with her blood,
Will recognize no children born of marriage
Made against Roman custom, Roman law.
Besides, you know, in banishing her Kings
Rome took a hatred to the name of King.
Though Rome is faithful to the race of Cæsars,
That hate of Kings and Queens is furious still.
For Julius Cæsar longed for Cleopatra,
But dared not marry her. She was a Queen.
Mark Antony, who made an idol of her,
Dared never marry her. And since that time
Caligula and Nero, monstrous men,
Who stamped beneath their feet the laws of Rome,
Still feared that law, and did not dare to make
Marriages hateful to the Roman heart.
You have commanded me to be sincere—
Well, in the East, a slave, whom you set free,
A man still half a slave, a branded man,
Marked with hot irons, Lord, the freed man Pallas[1],
Married two Queens of Berenice's blood;
And do you think that you could marry her
Without outraging Rome while men know that?
You, marry her, while three days' sail from Rome
A branded slave, freed from our fetters lately,
Marries her relatives!
That is what Romans think about your love.
It may well be that ere this evening comes
The Imperial Senate's self will come to you,
To tell you all that I have told you now.
To say that Rome falls at your very feet
And asks that you should make another choice
More worthy her and you.
You might be thinking of your answer, Lord.
*Tit.* Alas! they ask me to give up myself.
*Paul.* It is a bitter struggle, I confess.
*Tit.* Bitterer a thousand times than you can think.
It has been very life to see her here,
Each day to see her, love her, and to please her.
I have a hundred times given thanks to God
For bringing all the East beneath my Father
And putting bleeding Rome into his hands.
I have desired my dead Father's place,
Much as I loved him,
In hope of making Berenice Empress.
And now, Paulinus, when the time has come,
In spite of all my love and all her beauty,
In spite of all my lover's oaths and tears,
Now that I have Imperial power to crown her,
Now that I love her deeper than before,
Now that a happy marriage might unite us
After five years of prayers and hopes and love,
After all these, Paulinus—Oh, ye gods!
*Paul.* What is it, Lord?
*Tit.* I part from her for ever.
If I have made you speak to me to-day,
It was because I wished that your great friendship.
Should help to kill my love which dies most hard.
Believe me, it is hard to conquer love;
My heart will bleed for more than one day yet.
My love was peace in those first days of love,
When still my Father was the Emperor,
I was the master of my fate and free,
Accounting to myself for my desires;
But when the gods recalled my Father to them,
My pleasant error was removed from me;
I felt the heavy load imposed upon me;
I knew that presently I should be forced

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[1] **Pallas**: Historically it was the Emperor Claudius, 41–54 A.D., who freed this slave and made him his treasurer. See the original.

To give up self and all the loves of self,
And do the Will of God and not my own,
And give my life to work, not to myself.
And now, to-day, Rome watches what I do.
Shameful to me and ominous to her
If my first act should scatter every custom
And build my happiness on broken law.
I have resolved to make this sacrifice;
But how prepare Queen Berenice for it?
How can a man begin?
These last eight days full twenty times I've tried
To tell her this,
But at the first word my poor stumbling tongue
Seemed frozen in my mouth, I could not speak.
I hoped my sorrow and anxiety
Might make her feel our common misery;
But she has not suspected and knows nothing.
Now I have gathered all my constancy,
Now I must see her and must tell her all.
Now I am waiting for Antiochus:
I shall give him the prize I cannot keep,
And bid him take her back into the East.
He will leave Rome to-morrow with the Queen,
And I shall see her now and tell her this,
I shall now speak to her for the last time.
*Paul.* Lord, I expected this from your great glory;
I knew your heart would not destroy its work,
That you, the conqueror of so many nations,
Would conquer all your passions if you willed.
*Tit.* Glory is cruel under its fine names;
My sad eyes find her lovelier than glory.
If I have dared the death in seeking glory,
It was because her beauty lit in me
A longing for all lovely, splendid things.
You know quite well I did not always have
Renown or glory. I'd an evil name,
My youth was spent within the Court of Nero
And followed ways I love not to recall.
It was my seeing her that changed my life,
And to please her I loved, I did strange things
And came back triumphing. But blood and tears
Were not sufficient to win love from her,
So then I undertook to help the wretched.
I was more happy than my tongue can say
When she was pleased with work that I had done.
I owe her everything, and as reward,
Reward for all the good that she has done me,
I shall say “Go, and never see me more.”
*Paul.* Sir, do you fear that she will think you faithless?
The very Senate is surprised to think
How many honours you have given the Queen.
You have given her magnificence of power,
Up to Euphrates you have made her Queen
Over a hundred peoples.
*Tit.* But petty solace for a grief so great.
I know the Queen; I know only too well
That she has asked for nothing but my heart.
I loved her, she loved me; and since that day—
I cannot say if it were glad or sorry—
Her life has had no object but her love.
Unknown at Court, a stranger here in Rome,
She passes all her days with no more thought
Save that she see me some time, and the rest
Expect to see me.
And if, as sometimes happens, I am late,
I find her weeping.
All that there is most powerful in love—
Joy, beauty, glory, virtue, are in her.
For five long years each day that I have seen her
Has given me the joy the first sight had.
Let's think no more, because the more I think,

The more my made up mind shakes in its purpose.
Once more, once more, one must not think about it.
I know my duty and must follow it,
Whether I live or die is no great matter.

*Enter* RUTILIUS

*Rutilius.* My lord, Queen Berenice would speak with you.
*Tit.* Paulinus—
*Paul.* So, Lord, you seem all ready to draw back.
Remember all your noble plans; it's time.
*Tit.* Well, let us see her. Let her enter there.

*Enter* BERENICE

*Ber.* Do not be vexed if with a too great zeal
I break the secret of your solitude.
While your Court rings with all your gifts to me,
Would it be right were I to hold my peace?
Your mourning time is past; you are alone,
And none can hinder you; and yet, my Lord,
You do not come to see me as of old.
I hear you offer me another crown,
Yet hear it not from you. Give me more love,
Give me less glory, Lord. Can your love show
Only through orders of the Senate, then?
Ah, Titus! what new care does your love bring me?
Can it give naught but princedoms? Ah! Since when
Have you believed that greatness touches me?
A look, a sigh, a word out of your mouth,
Makes the ambition of a heart like mine.
See me more often, do not give me things.
Are all your moments given to the Empire?
After eight days have you no word to say?
Lord, reassure my trouble with a word.
Did you then speak of me when I surprised you?
Lord, was I at the least within your thought?
*Tit.* Doubt it not, Lady. I attest the gods
That you are ever present in my thought.
I swear that never absence, self, nor time,
Can tear you from this heart that worships you.
*Ber.* You swear eternal worship, but you swear
Most coldly. Why bring in the gods to witness?
Did you want oaths to overcome mistrust?
My heart does not contain mistrust of you;
I should believe you on a simple sigh.
*Tit.* Lady!
*Ber.* Well, Lord? But what, you do not answer.
You turn your eyes and seem confounded, Sire.
Can you not see me, save with looks of grief?
Does your mind always mourn your Father's death?
Can nothing charm away this eating care?
*Tit.* Would God my Father lived still,
I'd be happy!
*Ber.* Lord, this mourning
Justly proceeds from piety; but now
You have paid tribute to his memory
Enough; you owe now other cares to Rome.
I dare not speak to you about myself,
But formerly I could bring peace to you,
And you have listened to me even with pleasure.
You mourn a father still (alas, poor grief!)
While I, the memory makes me shudder still:
They would have dragged me from the man I love,
Dragged me, whose broken-heartedness you know
When you have left me even for a day.
I think that I should die upon the day.
That they forbade me see you.

*Tit.* Lady, alas! what do you say to me?
What time is this for speech? For pity, stop!
I am unworthy and your goodness kills me.
*Ber.* Unworthy, Lord! How could you be?
Does what you call my goodness weary you?
*Tit.* No, Lady, never. But since I must speak,
My heart seems burning in a living fire.
*Ber.* Go on.
*Tit.* Alas!
*Ber.* Speak!
*Tit.* Rome, the Empire—
*Ber.* Well?
*Tit.* We'll go, Paulinus—I cannot speak to her!
[*Exit* TITUS *and* PAULINUS

*Ber.* What, leave me thus and never say the reason!
What fatal thing is this? What have I done?
What does he want? What does this silence mean?
*Phen.* It seems more strange the more one thinks on it.
Does anything come to your memory
That might have prejudiced him against you, Lady?
*Ber.* Believe me, dear,
When I recall the memories of the past,
From when I saw him first to this sad day,
Loving him well has been my only fault.
Could I have said a thing that has displeased him?
Have I with too much warmth returned his gifts?
Or blamed his depth of mourning for his Father?
Or is it that he fears the hate of Rome?
He fears, perhaps; he fears to wed a Queen!
Alas! if that were true,—but no! so often
He has declared to me a hundred times
His love is stronger than their cruel laws—
A hundred times. He must explain his silence.
I cannot live in this uncertainty;
I could not live, thinking that I had hurt him,
Or that he did not care. Wait, let me think!
Now that I think, it seems explained to me.
He knows the love of King Antiochus,
Perhaps that vexes him. And I was told
That he expects Antiochus even now.
Let us not seek elsewhere the explanation;
Doubtless the trouble that alarms him so
Is but a light suspicion easily killed.
Would Heaven, Titus, that a rival came,
A man more powerful than you, to tempt me,
To put more Empires at my feet than you,
To buy my love with sceptres numberless,
While you had nothing for me but your love—
Ah! then, dear Titus, you would see the price
I put upon my heart. But come, Phenice,
Let us be quiet, for he loves me still,
And I do wrong to count myself unhappy.
If he be jealous, 'tis a sign of love.

CURTAIN

## ACT III

TITUS. ANTIOCHUS. ARSACES

*Tit.* So you are going, Prince? What sudden cause
Presses your going? (One might call it flight.)
You hide from me until you say goodbye.
Come, do you leave us as an enemy?
What will the Court, what will the Empire say?
Come! as your friend, have you a grudge against me?
Have I neglected you in all this crowd
Of Kings and Sovereigns pressing in the Court?
You were my friend during my Father's life,
Friendship was all I had to give you then.

Now, when my friendship has so much to give,
You fly from me.
Come, can you think that I forget old friends
And think about my greatness more than them,
And cast them off as things of no more use?
Prince, you are more than ever needful to me.
*An.* I, Lord?
*Tit.* Yes, you.
*An.* Alas, Sir, what can you expect but prayer
From an unhappy Prince?
*Tit.* Prince, I remember that my victory
Owed half its glory to your gallant deeds.
Rome has seen many of your captives pass,
And in the Capitol the spoils you took
Even from the Jews.
Now I expect from you no deeds of war,
Only your voice. I know that Berenice
Counts you her one true friend now here in Rome;
You, only, make one heart and soul with us.
Now, in the name of this most constant friendship
I bid you use the power you have upon her.
See her on my behalf.
*An.* I? See the Queen?
Sir, I have said farewell to her for ever.
*Tit.* See her but once again for me, Antiochus.
*An.* Lord, you must speak to her. She worships you.
Why rob yourself of such a charming task?
Sir, she is waiting for you with impatience.
I answer, Sir, for her obedience.
She herself told me, she will marry you:
You need but see her, Sir, for she is won.
*Tit.* Time was, so sweet a speech would have seemed sweet;
I should have been most happy. Even to-day
I thought to be most happy; yet to-day
I have to leave her, Prince.
*An.* Leave her? You, Lord?
*Tit.* Such is my destiny.
This is no marriage day for her and Titus;
I pleased myself in vain with that sweet hope.
Now, Prince, to-morrow she must sail with you.
*An.* O Heaven! what do I hear?
*Tit.* Pity my greatness!
Being Master of the world, I rule her fortune;
I can make Kings and then can unmake them,
And yet my heart is not my own to give.
Rome, ever bitter against Kings, disdains
An Empress born in the purple with a crown
And all a hundred Kings for forefathers.
My heart is free to love some common woman,
Rome would with pleasure see me marry one,
Even the most worthless in the city bounds—
Even Julius Cæsar bowed to this decree.
To-morrow, if she still be here, the Romans
Will come in fury here to bid her go.
Spare her this insult. Since we must surrender,
Let us surrender finely.
My eight days' silence and my absence from her
Must have prepared her for this cruel speech.
Now at this very time she waits for me
To tell her of the trouble of my heart.
Now spare my heart the pain of telling her.
Go to her and explain my misery:
Above all, beg that I may keep from her.
Be the one witness of her tears and mine,
Take to her my farewells and bring me hers;
But let us both avoid that deadly meeting
That would destroy our last poor constancy.
And if the hope that I shall always love her
Can make the bitterness of parting less,

Swear to her, Prince, I shall be always faithful
And carry to my grave my love for her.
My reign will be a long, long banishment
If Heaven, not content with taking her,
Pains me still farther with a long, long life.
You, who are only linked to her by friendship,
Do not abandon her in her distress,
And let her going back into the East
Be glorious like a triumph, not a flight.
And may your friendship last; and let my name
Be often in your quiet talks together.
Your Kingdoms shall henceforward touch each other,
And the Euphrates be your boundary.
The Senate will confirm this by a vote.
I join Cilicia[1] to your Comagena.
Good-bye! And do not leave my lovely Queen.
She was the one desire of my heart,
The one thing I shall love till my last breath. [*Exit* TITUS

*Ar.* So Heaven does justice to you! You will go,
But she'll go with you. Heaven does not take her,
But gives her.
*An.* Give me the time to breathe!
It is too great a change and I am shaken:
All that I love is put into my hands—
Can I believe what I have heard just now?
And if I can believe, should I be glad?
*Ar.* But, my great Lord, what can I think of you?
What barrier is there to your happiness?
A little while ago you came from here
All shaken from your last farewells with her,
Going, because her marriage broke your heart.
And now the marriage is the broken thing,
So what can grieve you now? Go where love calls you.
*An.* Arsaces, I am charged to take her home.
For a long time I shall be close to her;
It may be that in time her heart will change
And think my perseverance something sweet.
Titus o'erwhelms me here with all his greatness:
No one can be compared to him in Rome;
But in the East the Queen may count me something.
*Ar.* Doubt it not, Lord, all happens as you wish.
*An.* Ah! how we glory to deceive ourselves!
*Ar.* And why, "deceive ourselves"?
*An.* Ah! I might please her.
Might it not be that she would hear my love?
Among her woe, neglected by the world,
Might she not turn to me and stoop to me
For help that she would know my love would render?
*Ar.* Who could console her better than yourself?
Her fortune changes. Titus flings her off.
*An.* Alas, for that great change! Now I shall know
Even from her tears how much she loves him, friend.
For I shall see her weep, and pity her.
The only fruit of love that I shall gather,
Tears, which are not for me.
*Ar.* Why do you thus delight to wound yourself?
Did ever a brave heart show such a weakness?
Open your eyes, my Lord, and bravely think
How many reasons make the Queen your own.
Since Titus from to-day has cast her off,
Think thus. The Queen is forced to marry you.
*An.* Forced?
*Ar.* Yes. But grant her, first, some days for tears;
Let her first rush of sorrow run its course,
Then all will speak for you; her hate, her vengeance,
Absence of Titus, presence of yourself,
Time, and three kingdoms that she cannot rule—

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[1] Cilicia: a province in southwest Asia Minor, west of Syria; the capital was Tarsus.

Your kingdoms side by side, the better joined.
Interest, reason, friendship, all things bind you.
*An.* I breathe again. You give me life, Arsaces,
It is a happier prospect. Why delay?
Let us perform what we are bidden do.
We'll find the Queen, and, since the Emperor bids,
Tell her that Titus now abandons her.
No; stay! What am I doing? Can I do it?
I take this cruel task? My heart shrinks from it.
The lovely Berenice to hear from me
That she is cast aside! Unhappy Queen!
Who could have thought that this would be your fate?
*Ar.* Her anger will not fall on you, but Titus.
You only speak at his request, my Lord.
*An.* No, we'll not see her; we'll respect her grief.
Plenty will come to tell her of her fall.
Do you not think she will be sad enough
To learn to what contempt Titus condemns her,
Without this final thrust, to have the news
By Titus' only rival? Let us go.
By going thus we shall escape her hatred.
*Ar.* Sir, here she comes! Think what to do and say.
*An.* O Heaven!

*Enter* Berenice

*Ber.* So, Lord, you are not gone?
*An.* Lady, I see you looked for Cæsar here.
Blame only Cæsar if you find me here
In spite of my farewells.
Perhaps by this I should have been in Ostia,
Had he not strictly ordered me to stay.
*Ber.* He wanted you alone. He avoids us.
*An.* He only kept me here to speak of you.
*Ber.* Of me, Prince?
*An.* Yes.
*Ber.* What could he have to say?
*An.* Thousands of other men could tell you better
Than I.
*Ber.* What do you mean?
*An.* O be not vexed!
Others at such a moment might not keep
Silence so well, but would rejoice, perhaps,
Would swell with pride and joy to break the news;
But I, still trembling; I, as you know well,
Reckoning your quiet dearer than my own,
Would rather vex you than distress you, Queen.
I fear your sorrow more than your annoyance.
Before to-night you will acquit me, Queen.
Lady, good-bye.
*Ber.* But what strange speech! O stay!
O Prince, I cannot keep my grief from you.
You see before you a distressful Queen,
Whose heart seems killed, who only asks two words.
I think you said you feared to vex my quiet,
And therefore will not speak.
Lord, if my peace of mind be precious to you,
If I were ever precious in your eyes,
Lighten the darkness that is on my soul.
What did the Emperor say to you?
*An.* O, Lady,
For God's sake!
*Ber.* Is my heart's wish so little to you, then?
*An.* And if I speak, you will forever hate me.
*Ber.* I beg you speak. I order you to speak.
*An.* O gods!
Lady, once more, you'll wish I had not spoken.
*Ber.* Prince, either calm my mind by speaking now,
Or be assured that here our friendship ends.
*An.* Queen, after that, I cannot remain silent.

So, since you wish it, I will break the news.
Have no illusions now. For I shall tell you
Miseries, perhaps, of which you dared not think.
I know your very heart. Now be prepared,
For I shall strike your heart's most tender place.
Titus has ordered me. . . .
*Ber.* What has he ordered?
*An.* To say to you, that you . . . that you and he . . .
That you and he must separate, forever.
*Ber.* Separate? What? Who? I and he, you say?
*An.* Lady, let be. I must be just to him.
All that a loving and a generous heart
Could hold of wild despair in its worst moment,
Was there in Titus' heart. He wept. He loves you.
But little serves it if he love you still:
The Roman Empire dreads to have a Queen,
So you must separate. You go to-morrow.
*Ber.* Go! Misery! Phenice!
*Phen.* Ah, blessed Lady,
This is a bitter blow! It daunts your soul.
Show your soul's greatness.
*Ber.* Titus to leave me after all his vows,
Titus, who swore to me! I cannot think it!
He cannot leave me.
Perhaps they turn his innocent mind against me,
Some trap is made to tear us from each other,
For Titus loves me, he does not wish my death.
Go now and see him, I would speak with him.
Go!
*An.* And you could look at me, and think that I—
*Ber.* You long for this too well to persuade me.
Know, I do not believe you. But true or false,
Keep you forever from my sight henceforth.
Do not you leave me, Phenice, I am faint.
Help me, good Phenice, put your arm here—so.
[*Exeunt* BERENICE *and* PHENICE

*An.* Do I deceive myself? I heard her rightly?
"Keep me forever henceforth from her sight!"
I think I shall, for should I not have gone
Had Titus not against my will restrained me?
She thought to hurt me, but her hate has helped me.
You saw me going sick with hopeless love,
Jealous and in despair and wild of head;
And now, Arsaces, after this dismissal
Perhaps I may set out with resignation.
*Ar.* No, Lord; that less than ever. You must stay.
*An.* I stay? To see myself disdained!
See myself punished for the guilt of Titus!
With what injustice and indignity
She doubted of my truth.
She said that Titus loved her, I betrayed her!
Ungrateful Queen, to reckon me a traitor!
At such a time, too; at the fatal moment
When I was telling of my rival's sorrow.
When to console her I had made him seem
Loving and true, more than he is, perhaps.
*Ar.* Lord, what a pain you take to grieve yourself!
Let her grief go. Let its first anguish pass,
For in a week or month it will be passed.
Stay till it passes.
*An.* No, I go, Arsaces.
All things excite me to be gone from here,
So let us go. And for a long, long time
Let us not speak of her.
The day is not yet over. Go now, you;

See if her grief has not brought death to her.
Run! I will wait until you come to me;
We'll know if she's alive before we start.

CURTAIN

## ACT IV

*Ber.* Phenice is late. How slowly the time passes!
The bitter time! My strength is going from me.
Yet rest seems death to me. How late Phenice is!
It is ill-omened, and it frightens me.
It means that she will have no message for me,
That cruel Titus has not heard her speak,
But flies from her.

*Enter* PHENICE

Dear Phenice, have you seen the Emperor?
What did he say? When will he come?
*Phen.* I saw him, Lady,
Told him the trouble of your soul, and saw
His tears.
*Ber.* And is he coming?
*Phen.* Doubt not, madam,
He's coming; but you cannot see him thus;
You are disordered, madam; calm yourself,
And let me raise these fallen veils of lawn
And scattered hairs with which your eyes are hidden,
And marks of tears.
*Ber.* No, leave them, Phenice; he shall see his work.
What use are these vain ornaments to me?
If all my love and tears and sighs and sorrow—
Nay, if my certain death can call him not,
How shall these useless helps of beauty call him?
They do not call him now.
*Phen.* Why be unjust?
I hear a noise—the Emperor is coming.
Let us go in; we must avoid his courtiers,
See him alone, within. [*They go off*

*Enter* TITUS, PAULINUS *and* COMPANY

*Tit.* Go to the Queen, Paulinus. I will see her.
Leave me alone a little while; now go.
*Paul.* [*going*]. I fear this seeing the Queen!
Gods, save his glory and the country's honour.
Now for the Queen! [*Exit* PAULINUS

*Tit.* [*alone*]. Titus, the time has come; what will you do?
Have you prepared farewells, and steeled your heart
And braced it to the pitch of cruelty?
For in this bitter struggle now prepared
You need not bravery, but barbarism.
Now you will see her beauty all in tears;
And seeing that, can I fulfil my duty,
And break the heart I love, the heart that loves me,
And cast her off for ever?
Why should I break that heart? Who bids me? I do.
Yet why? Has Rome declared her wishes to me?
Does the mad rabble roar around the palace?
And do I see the State at the cliff's brink?
And can I only save her by this yielding?
All's quiet here, and I, too swift, too swift
To torture self, perhaps imagine evils
That I could thrust aside.
Is there no other means but this to save it?
Would they not see the virtue of the Queen?
Would they not presently confess her Roman?
After such tears and love and faithfulness
Rome would be kind to us.—Ah, no! not Rome!
Hatred of Kings is stamped in every soul,
And cannot be effaced by fear or love.
Rome, casting out her Kings, condemned your Queen.

Coward I am. I love. Give up the Empire,
Go to the wide world's end, and live with her;
Make place for those more fit than I to reign.
Yes, but are these those deeds in the great style,
That were to crown me in men's memories?
Now I have reigned eight days, and till this day
I have done all for love, nothing for honour.
Now I must do what honour asks of me
And break the only link that hinders me.

*Enter* Berenice

*Ber.* Leave me, I say! you cannot keep me back,
I must speak with him. So, Lord, you are here!
Well, is it true that Titus casts me off?
That we must part, that Titus orders it?
*Tit.* Lady, have pity on a wretched Prince.
We must not here give way to tenderness;
I have sufficient bitterness at heart
Without your tears to torture me still more.
Recall that heart, which many times of old
Showed me my duty; for the time has come;
But by your love, look simply at my duty
And fortify my heart against yourself,
And help me overcome my love for you.
Duty demands that we must separate.
*Ber.* You tell me this! I felt sure that you loved me!
My soul that loved you only lived for you.
Were you then ignorant of your Roman laws
When for the first time I confessed my love?
Why did you not, then, say "Oh, wretched Queen,
There is no hope! Why pledge your love to me?
Give not your heart to one who cannot take it."
But no, you took it, but to fling it back,
When that poor heart was living but for you.
Full twenty times they have conspired against us:
Then was the time—why not have cast me then?
There were a thousand things against me then
That might have helped console me in my grief.
I could have blamed your Father, all the Romans,
The Senate and the Empire, all the world,
Rather than this dear hand.
I should not then have had this cruel blow,
Even when I hoped to be most happy here.
Here, when your love can do all that it wishes
When Rome is silent and your Father dead
And all the world is bowing at your feet—
When I have nothing more to fear—then you—
You spurn me.
*Tit.* It was myself who thus destroyed myself,
I was content to live, to let myself
Be charmed; my heart would never search the future
For what might one day disunite us two.
I willed that nothing should o'er come by wishes.
Examined nothing, hoped the impossible;
Perhaps for death rather than these farewells.
The very obstacles increased my love.
And Empire spoke but glory had not spoken
As yet, within my heart, in the clear tone
With which it stirs the hearts of Emperors.
I know the torments that this parting brings,
I know too well I cannot live without you.
But this is not a question now of living;
I have to reign.

*Ber.* Then reign, harsh King, and be content with glory.
I will not vex you. No; I only waited
Before I would believe that those same lips
After a thousand oaths of love for me,
Would order me away for evermore.
I wished to hear you say it in this place.
Now nothing more. Good-bye for ever, then.
For ever, Sir, it is a cruel word
When one's in love.
A month will come, a year will come, and we—
We shall be parted by a world of seas.
How shall we suffer when the day begins
And the sun climbs the sky and then declines,
And Titus will not see his Berenice.
And all day long she will not look on Titus!
Perhaps you will not feel those days so long;
They may be long for me, too short for you.
*Tit.* Lady, I shall not live for many days;
I hope that presently news of my death
Will show you that I cannot live without you,
Will make you own, that you were loved indeed.
*Ber.* If that be true, why should we separate?
I do not speak of marriage with you now:
Rome has condemned me not to see you more:
But do you envy me the air you breathe?
*Tit.* You can do all things, Lady. Stay, if you wish;
I'll not forbid it; but I feel my weakness;
It would be endless struggle, endless fear,
And endless watching to restrain my steps
From turning towards your beauty all day long.
I cannot speak, my heart forgets itself,
Remembering only that it loves you dearly.
*Ber.* Well, Lord, and what could happen if I stayed?
Would all your Romans rise against me, Lord?
*Tit.* Who knows? Suppose they did? Suppose they clamoured?
I should be forced to back my choice by blood;
And if they did not speak and did not rise,
They would expect that some day I should pay them.
What would they not demand for their complaisance?
How can I guard the laws I cannot keep?
*Ber.* You count the tears of Berenice for nothing?
*Tit.* That is unjust.
*Ber.* Unjust? For unjust laws, that you can change,
You would condemn yourself to life-long grief.
You say Rome has her rights. Have you not yours?
And are Rome's interests dearer than our own?
Come, speak!
*Tit.* Alas, my Queen, you torture me!
*Ber.* You are the Emperor, Lord, and yet you weep.
*Tit.* Yes, Lady, it is true. I weep. I shudder.
When I accepted here the Emperor's purple,
Rome made me swear to maintain all her laws.
I must maintain them. Already many times
Rome has most strictly proved her Emperors;
They have obeyed her orders to the death,
To their sons' deaths. Rome and the glory of Rome
Have won the victory in those Roman hearts;
And I, in leaving you, do as they did,
But think I pass them in austerity.
*Ber.* All things seem easy to your barbarism.
I will not speak again of staying here.
Think you I would have wished, ashamed, despised,
To stay among the mocks of those who hate me?

Do not expect me to break out against you,
But if the gods have pity of my tears
And if your harsh injustice touches them,
And if before I die I, the sad Queen,
Wish for some bold avenger of my death,
I seek that bold avenger in your heart—
My love, my love that cannot be effaced,
My present grief and my past happiness,
Are the enemies that I will leave you, Lord.
I leave my vengeance unto them. Good-bye. [*Exit*

*Paul.* Lord, she has gone. Will she then leave the country?
*Tit.* Paulinus, follow her. I think she is dying.
Run to her help.
*Paul.* My Lord, her women will be round her there,
They'll turn her thoughts. Fear not, the worst is over.
Go on, my Lord, the victory is yours:
I know you could not hear her without pity;
I couldn't keep from pity even in seeing her—
But you must take long views, and you must know
That happiness will come from this brief pain:
All the wide world will ring with praise of you.
*Tit.* I hate myself! I am a brute! Even Nero
Was not so cruel. Oh, I cannot bear it!
If Berenice should die!
Come, let Rome say what it may.
*Paul.* What, Lord?
*Tit.* I know not what I say.
Excess of trouble overwhelms my spirit.
*Paul.* Do not be troubled for what Rome will say.
The news that she has gone is spread abroad;
Rome, which was murmuring, is triumphing,
The altars are all smoking in your honour,
And in the streets the crowd, singing your virtues,
Crown all your statues with eternal laurel.
*Tit.* Ah, Rome! Ah, Berenice! Unhappy fate,
To be a lover and an Emperor!

*Enter* Antiochus *and* Arsaces

*An.* What have you done, my Lord? For Berenice
Is perhaps dying in Phenice's arms—
Hears and knows nothing, but cries out for death;
And you alone, my Lord, can save her life.
Lord, why delay? Go, show yourself to her,
And speak one word.
*Tit.* And what word can I say?

*Enter* Rutilius

*Rut.* Lord, all the Tribunes, both the Consuls, and
The Conscript Fathers[1] of the Roman Senate,
With one voice in the State's name call for you.
A great impatient crowd is with them, Lord;
They wait your presence in your audience chamber.
*Tit.* I hear you. O great gods, I beg you save
That heart so like to die!
*Paul.* Come, then, my Lord, we will attend the Senate.
*An.* Go to the Queen first.
*Paul.* My Lord, you cannot! 'Twere indignity,
It were an insult to delay your coming,
Trampling the majesty of Rome beneath you.
*Tit.* Enough, Paulinus, I will hear the Senate.
[*Turns to* Antiochus.]
Prince, this is duty not to be put by;
Go, see the Queen. I hope on my return
She will not doubt my love.

Curtain

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[1] Conscript Fathers: *Patres conscripti*, the senators of Rome.

## ACT V

*Ar.* Where shall I find this all too faithful Prince?
Heaven grant that at this moment I may tell him
Of happiness such as he dare not hope.
Oh, happy chance, he comes! Sir, the Queen starts—
*An.* She starts?
*Ar.* She starts this evening.
She is most hurt that Titus leaves her there
So long in tears. She is not angry now,
But she renounces Rome and Emperor both,
And would be gone before the Romans see her
In her distress, and glory in her flight.
She writes to Cæsar.
*An.* And Titus?
*Ar.* Titus has not appeared before the Queen,
For the great crowd of Romans rings him round,
Shouting the titles that the Senate gives him.
Those titles, and the crowd, and that applause,
Become so many honourable chains
To keep him from the Queen and steel his heart.
In spite of all the sad Queen's sighs and tears,
I think perhaps he will not see her more.
*An.* Fortune has played with me, and many times
I have seen all my plans blown by the wind;
My heart scarce hopes, lest it should anger Fortune.
But Titus comes.

*Enter* TITUS

*Tit.* Let no one follow me.
Prince, I am come to keep my promise here—
Come with a broken heart. I wish to see her.
*An.* So dies the hope that you had given me!

*Enter* BERENICE *and* PHENICE

*Ber.* I do not wish to hear. My mind's made up;
I wish to go. Why show yourself to me?
Why bring more bitterness to my despair?
Aren't you content? I do not wish to see you.
*Tit.* Please listen!
*Ber.* The time's past.
*Tit.* Lady, a word!
*Ber.* No, not a word. You wish that I should go;
I am resolved to go, and I shall go.
*Tit.* No, stay.
*Ber.* Why should I stay?
To hear the people cheer for my misfortune?
Do you not hear their cruel joy already?
What have I done to them that they should cheer?
What have I done—save love yourself too well!
*Tit.* It is a senseless crowd. Why listen to it?
*Ber.* There's nothing here that does not wound my heart.
This room where we were lovers, you and I,
Come, Phenice.
*Tit.* You are unjust to me.
*Ber.* You must go back, Lord, to the sacred Senate
Which now applauds you for your cruelty.
Are you content with what they say and vote?
And have you promised to forget my memory—
That will not expiate your love for me.
Have you made promise that you'll hate me always?
*Tit.* No, I have promised nothing. O my gods!
Lady, for five years you and I have loved;
I never loved you better than to-day,
Never so tenderly, never so dearly.
*Ber.* "You loved," and yet at your command I go.
Do you find beauty in my heart's despair?
What use to me your heart's most useless love?

Show me less love for very pity's sake,
And let me at the least set forth persuaded
That I am leaving one who is not sad
To see me go.
[TITUS *reads a letter.*]
That is a letter that I wrote to you;
Read it, most cruel one, and let me go.
*Tit.* You shall not go! I cannot grant you leave.
No, for your going is a stratagem,
You mean to kill yourself, and all I love
Will be a bleeding memory.
[BERENICE *falls upon a chair.*]
Call for Antiochus. Let him quickly come.
Lady, when first I knew we had to part,
I braced my soul for great unhappiness,
But did not once foresee the tiniest part
Of what I suffer now.
Some minutes since I met assembled Rome,
The Senate spoke to me, I did not hear,
I did not know if I were Emperor,
Or even a Roman, and I did not care.
Lady, I might say this: that I am ready
To give up Rome for you and follow you.
Even to the wide world's end to live with you.
But you yourself would blush if I said that,
You would not, without shame behold me so,
See me a worthless Emperor, without Empire,
March in your train, a spectacle to men.
No, to escape these torments of the soul
There is a nobler way, as you know well,
Which men too shaken by misfortune take
When sorrow upon sorrow following close,
Comes like a secret order to surrender.
If I be forced to watch your sorrow, lady,
If I be forced to see you long for death,
If I be forced always to dread your death,
As dread I must unless you swear to me
To spare your life, then look for other sorrow,
In this my state I can do anything.
I will not answer that my hand, before you
Put not a bloody end to this our parting.
*Ber.* Alas.
*Tit.* No. There is nothing that I could not do.
So, madam, think that you control my life
And if I still am dear to you—

*Enter* ANTIOCHUS

Come, Prince, come in!
I have sent for you to be my witness,
For to judge if I have loved untenderly.
*An.* Lord, you have honoured me with your esteem,
And I can tell you here, Lord, I have been
A faithful friend to you—
A faithful friend although I was a rival.
*Tit.* My rival!
*An.* Yes, it's time I told you that.
Lord, I have always worshipped Berenice,
Have striven to kill my love, but could not do it.
At least I could be silent, and I was.
Your change of heart gave me some feeble hope;
But the Queen's tears have wiped away that hope.
She asked to see you, and I called you, Lord,
And you came back. You love her. She loves you.
I pray the gods to keep their blows from you,
Or cast them upon me, whose life is yours.
*Ber.* Too generous Princes, I am in despair!
Titus, you know my heart; I can say truly
I never longed for greatness nor for glory.
I loved—I loved and wished to be beloved.
I thought your love had come unto its end.
I know my error now. I know you love me.
I am not worthy your trouble, nor deserve
That marrying me your Empire should be broken.
I think that for five years until to-day
My love for you has been a real love.

That is not all. Now, in this fatal moment,
By a last effort I must crown the rest;
I shall obey your orders to the last.
Good-bye, Sir. Reign. I shall not see you more,
Prince, after this farewell, you must be sure
I cannot listen to another's love;
But live, and make an effort like our own.
I love him, he loves me, and yet we part.
Go, Sir, far from me, and forget your love.
Good-bye. We'll be example to all time
Of the most tender and unhappy love
That ever was in dolorous history.
All is made ready. They are waiting for me.
No, follow not my steps. Good-bye!
For the last time, good-bye, Lord.
[*Exit*

*An.* Woe is me!

CURTAIN

## MOLIÈRE

The supreme dramatic genius of France was a writer not of tragedy but of high comedy. One of the most popular men at the splendid court of Louis XIV, the Grand Monarch, was the comedian Jean Baptiste Poquelin, known by his stage name, **Molière** (1622–1673). Born in Paris, of a prosperous bourgeois family, educated at one of the best colleges of Paris, he had when barely twenty-one joined a company of strolling actors. At the time when Corneille's great tragedies were carrying Paris by storm, Molière, in his tours through the French provinces, was becoming an accomplished actor and an experienced playwright. Finally at the age of thirty-six, he returned to Paris and won the patronage of Louis XIV. Molière's troupe was assigned a theatre in the Hôtel du Petit Bourbon, where they played three days a week, the troupe of Italian comedians using the same theatre on the alternate days. In spite of the hostility of the older companies at the Hôtel de Bourgogne and the Marais, he won such success with his plays that after the production of *Les Précieuses Ridicules* (*The Affected Young Ladies*) in 1659, he became the favorite dramatist of the King. In 1661 he was given the theatre built by Richelieu in the Palais Royal; and here for twelve more years he produced play after play. He was himself not only a dramatist, but also a brilliant actor, and a shrewd stage manager. His famous troupe resembled the modern repertory company, such as the Moscow Art Theatre, in that the members worked together on a fixed salary year after year, each actor playing many kinds of parts.

In 1673, when only fifty-one years old, Molière while acting the title rôle in his last play, *Le Malade Imaginaire* (*The Imaginary Invalid*), burst a blood vessel and died less than an hour afterward.

Molière wrote every variety of comedy from court ballets, farces, comedies of situation only, to the comedies of manners, and the high comedies of character which make him rank as the supreme writer of modern comedy. He is the greatest writer of realistic comedy as is Shakespeare of romantic comedy. He is a satirist of contemporary life and morals; yet at the same time through his genius he depicts the universal types of humanity. Behind the fun, the wit, the amusing situations that keep us laughing, lie a consummate portrayal of character, and a scathing attack on all pretense and hypocrisy. We learn to know human nature while we are being amused; but the wise kindliness of the dramatist makes us sympathize with rather than condemn its eternal absurdities.

The greatest of Molière's plays are: *Les Précieuses Ridicules* (*The Affected Young Ladies*) 1659; *Tartuffe*, 1664; *Don Juan*, 1665; *Le Misanthrope*, 1666; *Le Médecin Malgré Lui* (*The Doctor in Spite of Himself*) 1666; *L'Avare* (*The Miser*) 1668; *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme* (*The Tradesman Turned Gentleman*) 1670; *Les Femmes Savantes* (*The Learned Ladies*) 1672; *Le Malade Imaginaire* (*The Imaginary Invalid*) 1673. There is an entertaining sketch of a dress-rehearsal of Molière's troupe in *L'Impromptu de Versailles* (*The Impromptu at Versailles*) written in 1663 to ridicule his rivals who had attacked his comedy *L'École des Femmes* (*The School for Wives*). In 1682 his fellow actors La Grange and Vinat brought out a collected edition of his plays, just as Shakespeare's associates, Heming and Condell, published a memorial collection of the great dramatist's plays in 1623,—the year after Molière was born.

# L'AVARE[1]

## (The Miser)

### MOLIÈRE

Translated by Katharine Prescott Wormeley

*Produced on September 9, 1668*

PERSONAGES

HARPAGON[2], *father of Cléante and Élise; in love with Mariane*
CLÉANTE, *son of Harpagon, in love with Mariane*
ÉLISE, *daughter of Harpagon, beloved by Valère*
VALÈRE, *son of Anselme, lover of Élise*
MARIANE, *in love with Cléante, beloved by Harpagon*
ANSELME, *father of Valère and Mariane*
FROSINE, *an intriguing woman*
MAÎTRE SIMON, *a broker*
MAÎTRE JACQUES, *cook and coachman to Harpagon*
LA FLÈCHE[3], *valet to Cléante*
DAME CLAUDE, *servant-woman to Harpagon*
BRINDAVOINE[4] } *lacqueys to Harpagon*
LA MERLUCHE[5] }
A COMMISSARY OF POLICE.

*The scene is in Paris, at the house of Harpagon*

## ACT I

### SCENE I

VALÈRE, ÉLISE

*Valère.* Hey! how is this, my charming Élise? Why so melancholy after the kind assurances you have given me of your love? Amid my joy I hear you sigh, alas! Is it that you regret—tell me—regret to have made me happy? Do you repent of this engagement into which my ardor may have hurried you?

*Élise.* No, Valère; I never can regret aught that I do for you,—too sweet a power constrains me; nor have I strength even to wish that it were otherwise. But, to speak truly, 'tis the joy itself that makes me anxious. I fear to love too much,—more than I should.

*Val.* Élise! what can you fear from the affection that you feel for me?

*Élise.* Alas! a hundred things,—my father's anger; the reproaches of my family; the censure of the world; but most of all, Valère, the changing of your heart; that cruel coldness with which your sex so oft repays the too great ardor of an innocent love.

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[1] Copyright by Little, Brown and Company, Boston, Mass.

[2] Played by Molière himself.

[3] Played by Louis Béjart, brother-in-law of Molière. He was lame.

[4] Literally, "oat-stalk."

[5] Literally, "dried cod-fish." These names may have implied their half-starved appearance.

*Val.* Ah! do me not the wrong of judging me by others. Suspect me of all else, Élise, except the crime of failing in what I owe to you. I love you far too much for that; my love is such that it will last as long as life itself may last in me.

*Élise.* Ah! Valère, all men say the same; they are all alike in words; 'tis only by their deeds we find them different.

*Val.* Since deeds alone show what we are, wait, wait, at least, to judge my heart by them; impute to it no crimes through the mistaken fears of false foreboding. Do not torture me, I implore you, by the painful blows of such unwarranted suspicion, but grant me time to show you by a thousand and ten thousand proofs the truth and honor of my passion.

*Élise.* Alas! how easily we let the persons whom we love persuade us. Yes, Valère, I hold your heart incapable of wronging me. I know you love me with true love, forever faithful. I will not doubt you; I retract all fears, except the dread lest others blame me.

*Val.* But why that dread?

*Élise.* I should have nought to fear if all the world saw you with eyes like mine; for I see in your very person a warrant for the things I do for you. My heart has your deserts for its defence, supported by a gratitude which Heaven itself has bidden me feel for you. Hourly do I recall that dreadful danger in which our knowledge of each other first began; that surpassing generosity which made you risk your life to rescue mine from the fury of the waves; those cares, so tender! after you had dragged me from the water; and then, the unfailing homage of an ardent love which neither time nor difficulties have repelled; a love which binds you to this place, neglecting parents and your country, disguising your true station, and becoming, for my sake,—that you may see me daily,—a steward in my father's household. All this has wonderful effect indeed upon my heart. It is enough to justify, in my eyes, the engagement I have made with you; but not enough, perhaps, in those of others, and thus I fear they will not share my feelings.

*Val.* In spite of all you say of me, 'tis for my love alone that I deserve you. As for the scruples that you have about your family, your father takes, alas! great pains to justify your action to the world. His monstrous avarice, and the stern manner with which he treats his children would authorize far stranger acts than yours. Forgive me, dear Élise, for speaking plainly; you know that on this point no good is ever said. But if, as I now hope, I may regain my parents, there will be no hindrance, I am sure, to winning their consent to all our wishes. I am expecting tidings with impatience, and if they are delayed I shall go myself to seek them.

*Élise.* Ah! Valère, no; I entreat you not to leave me; think only of how to win my father's good opinion.

*Val.* You see the pains I take to do so, and the adroit compliances I used to be admitted to his service; you know the mask of sympathy and kindred feeling behind which I disguise myself to please him, and the sort of personage which I daily play to obtain his liking. I'm making admirable progress; I'm learning that in order to win men there is no better way than to assume before their eyes their inclinations, give in to all their maxims, flatter their defects, and applaud whate'er they do. There is no fear of overdoing such compliance; the way we fool them may be made as visible as you please; the cleverest are mere dupes upon the side of flattery, and there is nothing so preposterous, so absurd, that they cannot be made to swallow it if we season it with praise. Sincerity suffers somewhat, it is true; but if we have need of men we must, alas! adapt our conduct to their foibles; and since we cannot win them in any other way 'tis not the fault of him who flatters, but of those who will be flattered.

*Élise.* But why not try to gain my brother's help in case the servant takes it into her head to reveal our secret?

*Val.* The two cannot be managed by one hand; the minds of father and of son are so opposed that the confidence of both would be most difficult to retain. But you, on your side, might act upon your brother and use the tie between you to bind him to our interests. Here he comes now, and I retire. Take the present opportunity of speaking to him; reveal as much as you think proper of our love.

*Élise.* I do not know if I have strength to make that revelation.

### SCENE II[1]

### CLÉANTE, ÉLISE

*Cléante.* I am so glad to find you here alone, Élise; I long to talk to you, that I may tell you of a secret.

*Élise.* And I am ready to listen, brother. What have you to tell me?

*Clé.* Many things; all in a single word,—I am in love!

*Élise.* You, in love?

*Clé.* Yes, in love. But stay, before we go on, let me say I know I am dependent on a father; I know the name of son subjects me to his will; that sons must not engage their love without the consent of those who gave them birth; that Heaven has set our parents masters over us, and enjoins us not to dispose of our affections except as they may please; that parents, being unbiased by foolish ardor, are much less liable to be misled than we, and know far better what is good for us; I know that we should sooner trust the enlightenment of their prudence than the blindness of our passion, and that the vehemence of youth oft leads us to the brink of fatal precipices. I tell you, sister, that I know all this, in order that you may spare yourself the trouble of saying it to me. My love will listen to nothing; and I request you to make me no remonstrances.

*Élise.* Have you engaged yourself to her you love?

*Clé.* No, but I am resolved to do so; and I conjure you, once more, urge no reasons in order to dissuade me.

*Élise.* Am I so perverse a person, brother?

*Clé.* No, sister; but you are not in love; you are ignorant of the soft violence of a tender passion within the heart; I fear your wisdom.

*Élise.* Alas! say nothing of my wisdom, brother. Who does not lack it, once in their lives at least? And if I bared my heart before you perhaps I might seem, even to your eyes, less prudent than yourself.

*Clé.* Ah! would to Heaven that your soul, like mine—

*Élise.* Let us talk first of your affairs, and tell me who it is you love.

*Clé.* A young girl who has lately come to live in this quarter of the town; one who seems made to inspire love in all who see her. Nature, sister, never formed any one more lovable; I felt transported from the moment I first saw her. Her name is Mariane; she is under the guidance of a worthy mother, who is almost always ill, and for whom this loving girl shows feelings of affection which are unimaginable. She waits upon her, pities her, comforts her, with a tenderness which would touch you to the soul. She has a most charming air and manner in all she does; a thousand graces shine in every action, a sweetness full of charm, a most engaging kindliness, an adorable modesty, a—Ah! sister, how I wish that you could see her!

*Élise.* I do see much of her in what you say; to understand her well, it is enough for me to know you love her.

*Clé.* I have discovered privately that they are not well off; in fact, even their careful management can hardly make the little that they have meet all their wants. Fancy, sister, what joy 'twould be to lift the one I love to better fortune,—to give her now, by stealth, a little help toward the few necessities of her modest family; and then conceive how hateful 'tis to me to feel that through my father's avarice I am powerless to taste that joy, or show to this dear girl a single token of my love.

*Élise.* Yes, I can well conceive that grief.

*Clé.* Ah! sister, it is greater than you can conceive. Was ever anything so cruel as the rigorous parsimony exercised upon us, the unheard-of indigence in which we are made to languish? What good will it be to inherit property if it comes to us at an age when we can't enjoy it, and if, moreover, in order to maintain myself, I am forced to run in debt on every side? I am reduced, like you, to ask the help of shopkeepers merely for decent clothing. I want you to help me sound my father and see how he will take the feelings I now have. If I should find him obstinate, I am resolved to go elsewhere with this dear girl and seek what fortune Heaven may offer us. I am trying now, in all directions, to borrow money for this purpose; and if your matters, sister, are like mine, and our father should insist on thwarting our desires, let us both leave him; let us free ourselves from a tyranny under which his intolerable avarice too long has held us.

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[1] **Scene II.** This means that VALÈRE goes out and CLÉANTE comes in. In a French play a new scene occurs with every exit or entrance.

*Élise.* 'Tis true that every day he gives us greater reason to regret our mother's death, and—

*Clé.* I hear his voice; come aside with me to finish what we are saying; after which we will join forces to face the harshness of his temper.

### Scene III

Harpagon, La Flèche

*Harpagon.* Out of this house at once! make me no answer. Come, begone! past-master of thievery! gallows-bird!—

*La Flèche* [*aside*]. Was ever any one as malignant as this cursèd old fellow? I believe, may I be thrashed for it! that the devil is in him.

*Harp.* What are you muttering there between your teeth?

*La F.* Why do you turn me out?

*Harp.* A pretty thing for you, you scoundrel! to ask why. Begone! and quickly too, or I'll knock you down.

*La F.* What have I done to you?

*Harp.* You have done that which makes me drive you out.

*La F.* My master, your son has ordered me to wait for him.

*Harp.* Then wait outside, and don't stand here, bolt upright like a sentry, in my house, observing all that happens, and seeking to get your profit out of it. I do not choose to have a spy on my affairs incessantly about me,—a traitor whose cursèd eyes beset my actions, covet my possessions, and pry into every corner of this house to find a way to rob me.

*La F.* How the devil should anybody rob you? Are you a robable man,—you who lock up everything and stand guard over it night and day?

*Harp.* I choose to lock up what I please, and to stand guard as I think best. I want no spies to watch for what I do. [*Aside.*] I tremble lest he suspect about my gold. [*Aloud.*] You're just the sort of a man to spread a rumor that I keep money hidden in my house.

*La F.* Oh! you have money hidden, have you?

*Harp.* No, you rascal, I never said so. [*Aside.*] I'm furious. [*Aloud.*] I asked you whether you did not, maliciously, spread a rumor that I had it.

*La F.* Hey! what signifies it to any one whether you have money or not, since 'tis all the same to us?

*Harp.* [*lifting his hand to strike* La Flèche]. Do you dare to argue? I'll knock your arguments about your ears. Out of this house, I say!

*La F.* Well, well, I'm going.

*Harp.* Wait! do you carry nothing off?

*La F.* What should I carry off?

*Harp.* Here! come here, and let me see. Show me your hands.

*La F.* There they are.

*Harp.* The others.

*La F.* Others?

*Harp.* Yes.

*La F.* There!

*Harp.* [*feeling* La Flèche's *breeches*]. These big trunk-hose of yours are made to be the receivers of stolen goods. I hope some scoundrel will yet be hanged because of them.

*La F.* [*aside*]. Ah! how a man like this deserves the thing he fears! What joy I'd take in robbing him!

*Harp.* Ho!

*La F.* How?

*Harp.* What's that you say of robbing?

*La F.* I said you had searched me over finely to see if I had robbed you.

*Harp.* That's what I mean to do. [*Feels in all* La Flèche's *pockets.*]

*La F.* [*aside*]. A plague upon all misers and their avarice!

*Harp.* What are you saying?

*La F.* What am I saying?

*Harp.* What did you say of avarice and misers?

*La F.* I said a plague upon all avarice and misers.

*Harp.* Whom did you mean?

*La F.* Misers.

*Harp.* Who are they, those misers?

*La F.* Villains and skin-flints.

*Harp.* Whom do you mean by that?

*La F.* What are you troubling yourself about?

*Harp.* I trouble myself about a thing of consequence.

*La F.* Do you think I meant to speak of you?

*Harp.* I think what I think; but I choose that you shall tell me to whom you spoke when you said that.

*La F.* I spoke—I spoke to my hat.

*Harp.* And I—I'll comb your hair for you!

*La F.* Why do you hinder me from cursing misers?

*Harp.* I hinder you from gabbling and being insolent. Hold your tongue.

*La F.* I named no one.

*Harp.* I'll thrash you if you speak.

*La F.* He whose nose is running, let him blow it.

*Harp.* Will you be silent?

*La F.* Yes, if I can't help it.

*Harp.* Ha!

*La F.* [*showing Harpagon a pocket in his doublet*]. Look! here's another pocket. Now are you satisfied?

*Harp.* Give it up, and make me search no farther.

*La F.* Give what up?

*Harp.* That which you have taken.

*La F.* I've taken nothing at all.

*Harp.* Are you sure?

*La F.* Positive.

*Harp.* Adieu; and go to the devil!

*La F.* [*aside*]. A fine dismissal, faith!

*Harp.* Your conscience knows the truth.

### Scene IV

*Harp.* [*alone*]. That scoundrel of a valet annoys me horribly; I can't endure to see the limping dog about. Truly, 'tis no trifling care to have a sum of money in the house. Happy is he who has his all invested and only keeps the little that he needs for his expenses. It is indeed a worry to invent a faithful hiding-place; for, to my thinking, safes are most unsafe, and I shall never trust to them. I think them a mere bait to robbers; they are always the first things that thieves attack.

### Scene V

Harpagon, Élise and Cléante *talking together at the back*

*Harp.* [*thinking himself alone*]. And yet I don't know that I did quite right to bury in the garden that last ten thousand crowns in gold they paid me yesterday. Ten thousand crowns in gold is quite enough to—[*seeing* Élise *and* Cléante, *aside*] Heavens! have I betrayed myself? These cares upset me! I fear I spoke aloud when thinking to myself. [*To* Élise *and* Cléante.] What is it?

*Clé.* Nothing, father.

*Harp.* How long have you been there?

*Clé.* We have just come in.

*Harp.* You heard?—

*Clé.* What?

*Harp.* The—

*Élise.* What, father?

*Harp.* What I was saying.

*Clé.* No.

*Harp.* Yes, you did, you did.

*Élise.* Excuse me.

*Harp.* I see quite well you overheard some words. I was discussing with myself the difficulty that we have in these days in getting money, and I said a man was lucky if he had ten thousand crowns.

*Clé.* We feared to enter lest we might disturb you.

*Harp.* I am glad to tell you this, so that you may not make mistakes and fancy that I said I *had* ten thousand crowns.

*Clé.* We do not ask to know of your affairs.

*Harp.* I would to God I had ten thousand crowns!

*Clé.* I do not think—

*Harp.* 'Twould be a great affair for me;

*Élise.* But these are matters that—

*Harp.* I have much need of them;

*Clé.* I think—

*Harp.* So large a sum would ease my mind;

*Clé.* You are—

*Harp.* I should not then complain, as I do now, that times are hard.

*Clé.* Good heavens! father, why should you complain? All the world knows that you are rich enough.

*Harp.* What! rich enough! Those who said that have lied. Nothing could be more false; whoever spread that rumor is a rascal.

*Élise.* Don't get so angry, father.

*Harp.* It is amazing that my own children should betray me and become my enemies.

*Clé.* To say that you are rich, is that to be your enemy?

*Harp.* Yes; such talk, and the expenses you incur will cause a robber to break into this house some night and cut my throat, thinking that I am made of ducats.

*Clé.* What great expenses have I incurred?

*Harp.* What expenses? Was ever anything more scandalous than the sumptuous equipage in which you drive about the town? I blamed your sister yesterday, but this is worse; this cries to heaven for vengeance. From head to foot there is enough upon your body to furnish an annuity. I have told you a score of times, my son, that all your ways are most displeasing to me; you ape a lord, and to go dressed like that you needs must rob me.

*Clé.* Rob you! how?

*Harp.* Do I know how? But if you do not rob me where do you get the means to keep the style you do?

*Clé.* I, father? Well, I gamble; and as I have good luck I spend the money that I win upon myself.

*Harp.* Then you do wrong. If you have luck at play you ought to profit by it, and put the money that you win at honest interest, so as to save it for a future time. I wish to know—not speaking of the rest—what good there is in all these ribbons with which you are tricked out from head to foot, and whether half a dozen aiguillettes[1] are not enough to hook your breeches. What is the vast necessity of spending money upon wigs when you can wear your natural hair which costs you nothing? I'll lay a wager that in that wig and ribbons there are twenty pistoles at the least; and twenty pistoles would give you eighteen francs, six sous, eight farthings, invested at no more than eight per cent.

*Clé.* You are right.

*Harp.* Well, let us say no more about this now, and talk of something else. [*Observing that* Cléante *and* Élise *are making signs to each other.*] Hey! [*Aside.*] They are making signs to steal my purse! [*Aloud.*] What is the meaning of those gestures?

*Élise.* We were disputing, my brother and I, which should speak first, for we have both something to say to you.

*Harp.* And I have something to say to both of you.

*Clé.* It is of marriage, father, that we wish to speak.

*Harp.* It is of marriage that I mean to talk to you.

*Élise.* Oh, father!

*Harp.* Why that cry? Is it the word, my daughter, or the thing that frightens you?

*Clé.* Marriage may well alarm us both seen from your point of view; we fear that our feelings on the subject may not accord with yours.

*Harp.* Patience; do not alarm yourselves. I am aware of what is due to both of you, and you shall have no cause, neither the one nor the other, to complain of what I do. So, to begin at the end, [*to* Cléante] have you ever seen, my son, a certain young lady, living not far from here, whose name is Mariane?

*Clé.* Yes, father.

*Harp.* And you, my daughter?

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[1] aiguillettes: aglets; i. e., laces with metal tips.

*Élise.* I have heard of her.

*Harp.* What do you think of her, my son?

*Clé.* I think her charming.

*Harp.* What of her countenance?

*Clé.* Most virtuous, and full of soul.

*Harp.* Her air and manner?

*Clé.* Admirable, beyond a doubt.

*Harp.* Do you not think a girl like that deserves to be sought in marriage?

*Clé.* Yes, father; yes.

*Harp.* That such a match would be desirable?

*Clé.* Most desirable.

*Harp.* You think that she has all the signs of a good housekeeper?

*Clé.* I'm sure of it.

*Harp.* And that a husband would find great satisfaction with her?

*Clé.* Undoubtedly.

*Harp.* There is one difficulty. I fear she may not have the property she ought to have.

*Clé.* Oh! father, property is not of such importance when the question is of marrying an honest girl.

*Harp.* Excuse me as to that, my son. But what I have to say is this: if we do not find in her the property we need we can endeavor to recoup it in some other way.

*Clé.* That's understood.

*Harp.* Well, I am very glad to find you share my feelings. Her upright bearing and her docility have won my heart, and I'm resolved to marry her,—provided I find she has some little means.

*Clé.* Oh-h!

*Harp.* What?

*Clé.* You say you are resolved—

*Harp.* To marry Mariane.

*Clé.* Who? You—you?

*Harp.* Yes; I, I, I. What means all this?

*Clé.* I am seized with sudden giddiness—I must go!

*Harp.* 'Tis nothing: go to the kitchen and drink a glass of pure cold water.

### Scene VI

Harpagon, Élise

*Harp.* Here's my dainty popinjay!—with no more vigor than a fowl. Now, my daughter, you see what I'm resolved on for myself. As for your brother, I have chosen a certain widow, who came to see me here this morning. As for you, I give you to the Seigneur Anselme.

*Élise.* The Seigneur Anselme!

*Harp.* Yes; a man of middle age, prudent, wise, with a large property, and only fifty.

*Élise* [*making a curtsey*]. I do not mean to marry, father, if you please.

*Harp.* [*mimicking her*]. And I, my little girl and *mimi*,[1] I mean that you shall marry, if you please.

*Élise* [*curtseying again*]. Excuse me, father.

*Harp.* [*mimicking her*]. Excuse me, daughter.

*Élise.* I am the very humble servant of the Seigneur Anselme, but [*curtseying again*] with your permission, I shall not marry him.

*Harp.* I am your very humble servant, but [*mimicking her*] with your permission, you will marry him to-night.

*Élise.* To-night?

*Harp.* To-night.

*Élise* [*curtseying again*]. I shall not do so, father.

*Harp.* [*mimicking her*]. You will do so, daughter.

*Élise.* No.

*Harp.* Yes.

*Élise.* No, I tell you.

*Harp.* Yes, I tell you.

*Élise.* That is a thing to which you can't compel me.

*Harp.* That is a thing to which I shall compel you.

*Élise.* Then I shall kill myself rather than marry such a husband.

*Harp.* You will not kill yourself, and you will marry him. But what audacity is this? Who ever heard of a daughter talking to her father in this way?

*Élise.* Who ever heard of a father marrying a daughter in this way?

*Harp.* No one can say a word against the match. I'll warrant you that all the world will approve of such a choice.

*Élise.* And I will warrant you that not a single sensible person will approve of it.

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[1] mimi: *ma mie*, corruption of the old French *m'amie*, my dear.

*Harp.* [*seeing* VALÈRE *in the distance*]. Here's Valère; will you let him judge between us of this affair?

*Élise.* Yes, I consent to that.

*Harp.* Will you give in to his opinion?

*Élise.* I will go by what he says.

*Harp.* Very good; that's settled.

### SCENE VII

### VALÈRE, HARPAGON, ÉLISE

*Harp.* Come here, Valère; we have selected you to say which of us two, my daughter or myself, is right.

*Val.* You, monsieur, without a doubt.

*Harp.* Do you know the subject of our dissension?

*Val.* No, but you must be right, you are so wise.

*Harp.* I wish to give her, this very evening, to a husband who is both virtuous and rich; and the hussy tells me to my nose she scorns to take him. What do you say to that?

*Val.* What do I say to that?

*Harp.* Yes.

*Val.* Ha! ha!

*Harp.* What do you mean?

*Val.* I mean that I agree with you in the main, and that your judgment is invariably right. But, on the other hand, she is not altogether wrong, and—

*Harp.* What! when I tell her that the Seigneur Anselme is an admirable match? He's a nobleman who is noble; gentle, wise, sedate, and well-to-do, and one who has no child by his first marriage. Could she find a better husband?

*Val.* True. But she may say that you are hurrying matters; and that she wants a little time to see if her inclinations lead her to the match.

*Harp.* It is an opportunity that must be clutched. I am offered an advantage which I could never find elsewhere,—he offers to take her without a dowry.

*Val.* Without a dowry?

*Harp.* Yes.

*Val.* Ah! then I say no more. That is a most convincing argument; I yield to that.

*Harp.* To me it is a most important saving.

*Val.* Undoubtedly; there's no denying that. 'Tis true your daughter may insist that marriage is a greater matter than you regard it; that it concerns the happiness or misery of all her life; and that a tie which lasts until her death should not be entered into without caution.

*Harp.* No dowry!

*Val.* Yes, you are right; that settles all. Some may tell you that a daughter's inclination is a thing you ought to heed, and that so great an inequality, in years, in temperament, in feeling, renders a marriage liable to grievous shocks.

*Harp.* No dowry!

*Val.* Ah, yes! there's no reply to that. Who the devil could stand against that argument? No matter if scores of fathers would rather make the happiness of their daughters than make money out of them,—fathers who would not sacrifice their children to self-interest; who seek, before all else, to give to marriage those sweet harmonies which guard its honor, its tranquillity, its joy, and—

*Harp.* No dowry!

*Val.* True, true; that shuts the mouth of every one. No dowry! how can so strong a reason be resisted?

*Harp.* [*aside, and looking into the garden*]. Ha! I hear the barking of a dog. Is some one digging for my money? [*To* VALÈRE.] Wait here; I shall be back directly.

### SCENE VIII

### VALÈRE, ÉLISE

*Élise.* Are you joking, Valère, to talk to him in that way?

*Val.* I do it not to aggravate him, and to get sooner to our end. There are minds that we must take obliquely; natures that resist all opposition; restive temperaments which balk at truth, and stiffen themselves against the straight and narrow way of reason. Such minds are led by decoying them into the ways they ought to go. Seem to consent to what they wish and you will come the sooner to your ends.

*Élise.* But this marriage, Valère?

*Val.* We'll find a means to break it off.

*Élise.* But how, if he intends it to take place tonight?

*Val.* Ask for delay; pretend an illness.

*Élise.* Yes, but the trick will be discovered if he calls in a doctor.

*Val.* Oh! you're joking; what does a doctor know? You can invent what illnesses you please, and he will tell you what has caused them and give the reasons why.

### Scène IX

Harpagon, Valère, Élise

*Harp.* [*in the background*]. 'Twas nothing, thank God!

*Val.* [*not seeing* Harpagon]. At any rate, our last resource is flight, which will make all things safe; and if your love, my beautiful Élise, is capable of firmness [*Sees* Harpagon.]—Yes, a daughter must obey her father. It is not for her to consider what the husband is. When the great argument of *no dowry* is produced, she must be ready to accept whatever is provided for her.

*Harp.* Good; that is well said, indeed!

*Val.* Monsieur, I beg your pardon if I go too far and take a liberty in speaking to your daughter as I do.

*Harp.* No, no; I am delighted; and I wish you to assume an absolute power over her. [*To* Élise, *who is going away.*] Yes, you may want to fly, but I give him the authority over you which Heaven has given to me; and I intend that you shall do exactly as he says.

*Val.* [*to* Élise]. After *that*, will you resist my arguments?

### Scène X

Harpagon, Valère

*Val.* Monsieur, with your permission I will follow her and continue the lessons I have now begun.

*Harp.* Do so, and you'll oblige me greatly. Certainly—

*Val.* 'Tis well to hold the reins a little tight.

*Harp.* True, and we ought to—

*Val.* Give yourself no uneasiness; I think that I can bring your ends about.

*Harp.* Do what you will. I am going now to take a little turn about the town, but I shall soon be back.

*Val.* [*addressing* Élise *and going to the side by which she went away*]. Yes, money is more precious than all else in life. You should give thanks to Heaven for the worthy husband your father chooses for you. He knows life, and when the Seigneur Anselme offers to take you without a dowry there's nothing further to be said. All is summed up in that; *no dowry* stands in place of looks, youth, birth and honor, wisdom and integrity.

*Harp.* Ah! the fine fellow! That's talking like an oracle. Happy indeed am I to have a steward of that mind.

## ACT II

### Scène I

Cléante, La Flèche

*Clé.* Ha! traitor that you are! where have you poked yourself? Didn't I order you—

*La F.* Yes, monsieur; and I was here, waiting your orders like a post; but your father, the most malicious of men, drove me away in spite of all that I could say; I ran some risk of being beaten.

*Clé.* How is that business getting on? Things are more pressing than ever, for since I saw you I have made the discovery that my father is my rival.

*La F.* Your father in love!

*Clé.* Yes; and I have had the greatest trouble to conceal from him the anxiety into which the news has thrown me.

*La F.* He to be meddling with love! What the devil does he mean? Is he flouting the world? Was love invented for a man of his cut?

*Clé.* 'Tis for my sins this passion has got into his head!

*La F.* But why do you conceal from him your love?

*Clé.* To cause him less suspicion, and keep, if possible, some outlet by which to defeat this marriage. What answer did they make you?

*La F.* Faith, monsieur, those who borrow money get the worst of it; a man must swallow many things when he is reduced, like you, to fall into the hands of money-sharks.

*Clé.* Then I can't have the money?

*La F.* Beg pardon, monsieur. Maître Simon, the broker to whom they sent us, an active man and full of zeal, says he has taken desperate pains for you; he vows your countenance alone has won his heart.

*Clé.* Shall I have the fifteen thousand francs I want?

*La F.* Yes, but on certain trivial conditions, which you must accept if you wish the matter to go through.

*Clé.* Did he send you to the man who is to lend the money?

*La F.* No, truly; the matter isn't done in that way. The lender takes more care than even you to hide himself; there's greater mystery in such affairs than you may think for. Maître Simon won't even tell the lender's name. But he is to have a conference with you to-day, in a hired house, in order to hear from your own lips about your family and your property. And I've no doubt that the mere mention of your father's name will make things easy.

*Clé.* Principally because, my mother being dead, my father can't deprive me of her property.

*La F.* See! here are the conditions which the lender dictated to our go-between,—requesting that they may be shown to you before the matter should go farther. [*Reads.*] "Provided the lender sees all securities; provided also that the borrower be of age, and comes of a family with ample, safe, substantial property clear of all incumbrance, a proper and precise bond will be executed before a notary; the latter to be the most honest man in his profession, who, for this reason, must be chosen by the lender, to whom it is of chief importance that the deed be legally drawn."

*Clé.* I see no objection to that.

*La F.* [*Reads*]. "The lender, not to burden his conscience with scruples, lends money only at five and a half per cent."

*Clé.* Five and a half! *Parbleu!* that's honest; nothing to complain of there.

*La F.* True. [*Reads.*] "But, as the said lender does not have in his possession the sum required, and therefore is obliged, in order to oblige the borrower, to borrow the money himself at twenty per cent, it is agreed that the above-named first borrower must pay the said interest in addition to his own, inasmuch as it is only to oblige him that the said lender takes the loan."

*Clé.* Who the devil is this man! a Jew? an Arab? Why! that's more than twenty-five per cent.

*La F.* True; so I said. You'll have to be cautious and look into this.

*Clé.* Look into it! How do you expect me to look into it? I want the money, and I shall have to agree to it all.

*La F.* That's the answer I gave Maître Simon.

*Clé.* What else?

*La F.* Only one other little clause. [*Reads.*] "Of the fifteen thousand francs demanded the lender can only pay down in ready money the sum of twelve thousand francs; the remaining three thousand the borrower must take in goods and chattels, consisting of clothing, jewelry, and furniture comprised in the annexed inventory, which the said lender has appraised, in good faith, at the lowest possible price."

*Clé.* What does that mean?

*La F.* Listen to the inventory: "First, one bed on four feet, with bands of Hungary point, neatly appliquéd on olive-green cloth, with six chairs and counterpane of the same; all in good condition and lined with taffetas shot red and blue. Also, one tester[1] with ends, of good Aumale serge, ashes of roses, with silk fringe and tassels."

*Clé.* What does he expect me to do with that?

*La F.* Wait. [*Reads.*] "Also, a tapestry of the loves of Gombaud and Macée.[2] Also, one large walnut table, with twelve turned columns or pillars which pull out at each end; and six stools of the same beneath it."

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[1] tester: bed canopy.

[2] Gombaud and Macée: comic pastoral lovers.

*Clé.* Do I want such things, *morbleu!*

*La F.* Have patience. [*Reads.*] "Also, three large muskets, inlaid mother of pearl, with matched sights. Also, one brick furnace, with two retorts and three receivers, suitable for distilling."

*Clé.* It is infuriating!

*La F.* Gently. [*Reads.*] "Also one Bologna lute with all its strings, or nearly all. Also, one bagatelle-board, one back-gammon-board, one game of goose, revived from the Greeks, suitable for passing the time when there is nothing to do. Also, one lizard-skin, three and a half feet long, stuffed with hay, suitable to hang on the wall of a bedroom. All the above-mentioned articles, actually worth over four thousand five hundred francs, are put down to the value of three thousand by the good-will of the lender."

*Clé.* A plague upon his good-will, villain and cut-throat that he is! Who ever heard of such usury? He is not content with the savage interest he exacts, but he must needs oblige me to take a third of the loan in rubbish he has picked up in the streets! I sha'n't get a hundred crowns for it; and I am actually compelled to agree to his terms; he is in a position to make me accept anything, for he holds me, the wretch! with a dagger at my throat.

*La F.* I see, monsieur, begging your pardon, that you're in the broad road Panurge[1] took to ruin; getting money in advance, buying dear, selling cheap, and burning your candle at both ends.

*Clé.* How can I help it? This is what young men are brought to by the cursèd avarice of fathers; and people are surprised, after this, that sons should wish them dead!

*La F.* Well, I do say your father would rouse the soberest man in the world against his niggardliness. I haven't, thank God, any gallows-bird propensities, and among my fellows, whom I see engaged in various little schemes, I know how to keep out of scrapes which deserve hanging; but, for all that, your father, by his proceedings, leads me into such temptation to rob him that I do believe if I did I should do a meritorious action.

*Clé.* Give me that inventory; I want to look it over.

### Scene II

Harpagon, Maître Simon; Cléante *and* La Flèche *in the background*

*Maître Simon.* Yes, monsieur; he is a young man who is much in need of money; his affairs are urgent, he must get it, and he will doubtless agree to all you require.

*Harp.* But are you sure, Maître Simon, that I run no risk? Do you know the name, property, and family of this young man?

*Maître S.* No; I can't inform you on those points. I only heard of him by chance; but he will, himself, explain his affairs to you. His man assures me that you cannot fail to be perfectly satisfied when you have seen him. All that I can tell you is that his family is very rich; he has no mother, and he is willing to bind himself, if you wish, in case his father dies within eight months.

*Harp.* Well, that's something, certainly. Charity, Maître Simon, requires us to do good to others when we can.

*Maître S.* That's understood, of course.

*La F.* [*low to* Cléante, *recognizing* Maître Simon]. What's all this? Here's Maître Simon talking to your father.

*Clé.* [*low to* La Flèche]. Can any one have told him who I am? Have you betrayed me?

*Maître S.* [*to* Cléante *and* La Flèche.] Ha! ha! you are in a hurry! Who told you this was the house? [*To* Harpagon.] Monsieur, it was not I who revealed to them your name and residence. But there's no harm, as I think, in their knowing it. They are very discreet persons, and you can now have a full understanding with them.

*Harp.* How so?

*Maître S.* [*motioning to* Cléante]. Monsieur is the person I mentioned who wishes to borrow fifteen thousand francs from you.

---

[1] Panurge: the humorous rascal, companion of Pantagruel in Rabelais's satirical romance *Pantagruel.*

*Harp.* [*to* CLÉANTE.] What, scoundrel! is it you who have taken to these criminal ways?

*Clé.* What! is it you, father, who are guilty of these shameful actions?

[MAÎTRE SIMON *escapes*, LA FLÈCHE *hides himself*

### SCENE III

HARPAGON, CLÉANTE

*Harp.* It is you, is it, who wish to ruin yourself by these disgraceful loans?

*Clé.* So, 'tis you, is it, who seek to enrich yourself by this criminal usury?

*Harp.* How dare you, after this, appear before me?

*Clé.* How dare you present yourself, after such an action, before the eyes of the world?

*Harp.* Have you no shame, I ask you, in coming to such debauchery, rushing into frightful expenses, and disgracefully dissipating the property your parents have amassed for you by the sweat of their brow?

*Clé.* Do you not blush at the dishonor you bring upon your name by this traffic that you practise, sacrificing honor and reputation to an insatiable lust of amassing gold, and charging an interest far beyond the most infamous extortions ever invented by the worst usurers?

*Harp.* Out of my sight, villain! Out of my sight, I say!

*Clé.* Who is the most criminal, think you,—he who buys the money which he needs, or he who steals the money he does not want?

*Harp.* Go, I tell you! and irritate my ears no longer with such talk. [*Alone.*] I am not sorry for this adventure after all; it warns me to keep a closer eye than ever on his actions.

### SCENE IV

FROSINE, HARPAGON

*Frosine.* Monsieur—

*Harp.* Wait a minute; I'll return and speak with you. [*Aside.*] It is time I took a little turn around the gold. [*Exit*

### SCENE V

LA FLÈCHE, FROSINE

*La F.* [*not seeing* FROSINE]. A queer adventure! He must have, somewhere, an ample stock of goods of all kinds, for we did not recognize a single thing upon that inventory.

*Fros.* Ah! 'tis you, my poor La Flèche. How is it we meet here?

*La F.* Ha! ha! so it is you, Frosine! What are you doing here?

*Fros.* What I do everywhere,—managing for other people, making myself useful to them, and profiting as best I can by the few talents I possess. In this world we must live, as *you* know, by our wits; and to persons in my position, Heaven has given no other means than trickery and intrigue.

*La F.* Have you any dealings with the master of this house?

*Fros.* Yes; I am managing an affair for him, out of which I expect a profit.

*La F.* From him? Ha, faith! you'll be clever if you get anything out of him. I warn you that money is a very scarce article in this house.

*Fros.* There are certain services which touch a man amazingly.

*La F.* I'm your humble servant, but you don't know Seigneur Harpagon. Seigneur Harpagon is of all human beings the human being who is least human, the hardest and most grasping mortal of all mortals on this earth. There is no service which can move his gratitude to open his purse. Flattery, esteem, benevolence in words, friendship, as much as you please, but money—not one bit of it! There's nothing more barren than his good-will. *Give* is a word for which he has such an aversion that he won't even say, "I give you good-day," only "I wish you good-day."

*Fros.* Oh, heavens! I know the art of milking men. I have a secret way of getting at their feelings, tickling their hearts, and finding their weak spots.

*La F.* All nonsense here. I defy you to soften the man in question on his money side. He's a Turk on that point, of a turkery to baffle the world. You may kill him, but you can't shake him.

In a word, he loves money more than reputation, honor, or virtue; and the sight of any one who asks for it gives him fits. It strikes his vitals, it stabs his heart, it tears his bowels out, and if— But here he comes, and I depart.

### SCENE VI

HARPAGON, FROSINE

*Harp.* [*to himself*]. All is safe. [*Aloud.*] Well, what is it, Frosine?

*Fros.* Dear me! monsieur, how well you look; your face is the very picture of health.

*Harp.* Mine?

*Fros.* I never saw your complexion so fresh and blooming.

*Harp.* What, seriously?

*Fros.* Yes; you have never in your life seemed as young as you are now. I've known many men of twenty-five look older than you.

*Harp.* Nevertheless, I'm over sixty, Frosine.

*Fros.* Well, sixty; what of that? 'tisn't worth thinking of. In fact, sixty is the flower of a man's age; you are about to enter on the best season of your life.

*Harp.* True; but twenty years less would do no harm, I fancy.

*Fros.* Are you joking? You don't need it; a man of your constitution will live to be a hundred.

*Harp.* Do you really think so?

*Fros.* I know it; you have every sign of it. Come a little nearer. There, between your eyes, I see the mark of a long life.

*Harp.* Have you studied signs?

*Fros.* Yes. Show me your hand. Heavens! what a line of life!

*Harp.* Where?

*Fros.* Follow that line; don't you see where it goes?

*Harp.* Well, what does that mean?

*Fros.* Faith! I said a hundred years; but you'll go beyond the six twenties.

*Harp.* Is it possible?

*Fros.* You'll never die in your bed, and you'll put your children and your children's children underground.

*Harp.* So much the better. But now, how is that matter coming on?

*Fros.* Why do you ask? Did you ever know me to undertake a thing in which I did not triumph? For marriages especially I have a wonderful talent. There are no pairs that I can't find means to couple together in a very little time. I think, if I took it into my head, I could marry the Grand Turk to the Republic of Venice.[1] Of course there are not such great difficulties in the present affair. As I had business with these ladies, I was able to talk of you. I told the mother plainly the plan you have conceived about Mariane from seeing her pass in the street or sitting at her window.

*Harp.* What answer did she make?

*Fros.* She received the proposition with joy. And when I intimated to her that you strongly desired that her daughter should be present to-night when your daughter's marriage contract is signed, she consented at once and agreed that I should bring her.

*Harp.* The fact is, Frosine, I am compelled to give a supper this evening to Seigneur Anselme, and I am very glad that Mariane should be present at the feast.

*Fros.* You are right. After dinner she is to call upon your daughter; and then she expects to take a turn around the fair before coming to your supper.

*Harp.* Well, then, they shall go together in my coach, which I will lend them.

*Fros.* That will suit her very well.

*Harp.* But, Frosine, did you sound the mother about the property she is able to give her daughter? Did you tell her that she must do something in that way, make an effort, bleed herself a little on an occasion like this? No girl is ever married without some sort of dowry.

*Fros.* Why! she's a girl who will stand you in at least twelve thousand francs a year.

*Harp.* Twelve thousand francs!

*Fros.* Yes. In the first place, she has been brought up to the greatest economy in food. She is a girl accustomed to live on salads, milk, cheese, apples; she doesn't require a well-served table, exquisite dishes, perpetual barley-broths, or any of those delicacies which other women demand,—things that are no trifles, and which mount up, by the end of the year, to at least three thousand francs. Besides this, she is fond of simple clothing; she doesn't care for splendid gowns, or rich jewels, or sumptuous furniture in which other women indulge with such extravagance; that alone is fully worth four thousand francs a year to you. Moreover, she has a horrible aversion to cards; which is not at all a common thing in women now-a-days; for I know some in our quarter who have lost at *trente-et-quarante*[1] over twenty thousand francs this year. But allow for a quarter only of that. Five thousand francs a year, cards; four thousand, clothes and jewels; that's nine thousand; and three thousand for food, and there's your twelve thousand a year in hand.

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[1] **Grand Turk . . . Venice:** The Venetian Republic had been warring with Turkey ever since the fall of Constantinople in 1453. In the year after *L'Avare* was produced, Venice finally lost the island of Crete to Turkey. The *republic* of Venice came to an end in 1797.

*Harp.* Yes, all that's very well; but there's nothing real in such a reckoning.

*Fros.* Excuse me; do you mean to say there is nothing real when you receive in marriage a dowry of great abstemiousness, a love of simplicity in dress, and a vast fund of hatred for cards?

*Harp.* It is a poor jest to make a dowry out of expenses she will not incur. I shall not give a receipt for what I don't receive. I must have money down for that.

*Fros.* Heavens! you'll have money enough; they have talked with me about a certain place in the country where they have property of which you will be the master.

*Harp.* I must be sure of it. But, Frosine, there's another thing that makes me anxious. The girl is young, as you see, and young people, as a rule, like those of their own age best and seek their company. I am afraid a man of my years may not be to her taste; and that might lead to certain disturbances in my home, which wouldn't suit me at all.

*Fros.* Ah! how little you know her. That is another peculiarity which I meant to tell you. She has a strong aversion for young men, and likes none but old ones.

*Harp.* She?

*Fros.* Yes, she. I wish you could hear her talk about it. She can't bear even the sight of a young man; but nothing delights her more, she says, than to see a fine old man with a majestic beard. The older he is, the more charming he seems to her; and I warn you not to try to make yourself look younger than you are. She wants a sexagenarian at the very least. It is not more than six months since she was on the point of being married, and she broke the engagement simply because her lover let her know he was only fifty-six and didn't wear spectacles.

*Harp.* Certainly that's a most uncommon thing.

*Fros.* It goes farther than I can tell you. There are certain pictures and engravings in her room, and what do you suppose they are? Adonis, Paris, Apollo, Cephalus?[2] No! they are fine portraits of Saturn, King Priam, Nestor, and good old Anchises[3] on his son's back.

*Harp.* How admirable! It is something I should never have expected. I am glad to know that such is her disposition. In fact, if I had been a woman myself I should never have liked young men.

*Fros.* I believe you. Poor trash indeed for a woman to love! Fine popinjays, i'faith, fine callants[4] to set young girls agog about them! I'd like to know what there is so tempting in a young man.

*Harp.* For my part I cannot comprehend it; I don't know why the women should love them as they do.

*Fros.* Women are downright fools. To think youth lovable—what nonsense! Are these blond striplings men? How can a woman be attached to such young animals?

*Harp.* So I say daily; look at that milk-sop air of theirs; and their three scraps of beard, sticking out like the cat's whiskers, and their tow wigs, and their slouching breeches, and their lean stomachs!

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[1] **trente-et-quarante:** a gambling game of cards.

[2] Adonis . . . Cephalus: all young and handsome.

[3] Saturn . . . Anchises: all old and wise.

[4] callants: callow youths.

*Fros.* Hey! they had need to be well set-up near a figure like yours. You're a man, indeed, that there's some satisfaction in looking at; men should be made and dressed like you to inspire love.

*Harp.* You think I look well?

*Fros.* Why, of course. You are charming, you ought to be painted. Turn round a little, please; nothing could be better. Let me see you walk. Now there's a well-made body,—free and easy in its motions, without a sign of physical weakness.

*Harp.* I haven't any, thank God—only my catarrh that troubles me now and then.

*Fros.* That's nothing; your catarrh isn't so unbecoming, and you cough gracefully.

*Harp.* But tell me, please; has Mariane seen me? Does she observe me as I pass her window?

*Fros.* No; but we have talked a great deal about you. I drew a picture of your person for her, and I did not fail to boast of your good qualities, and the advantage there would be in having such a husband.

*Harp.* You did well, and I thank you for it.

*Fros.* I have a trifling request to make of you, monsieur. I am engaged in a lawsuit, which I fear I may lose for want of a little money [Harpagon *looks grave.*], and you could easily help me to win it if you would be so kind. You cannot think the pleasure she will take in seeing you. [Harpagon *smiles.*] Ah! how certain you are to please her! what an admirable effect that old-fashioned ruff will have upon her mind. But, above all, I know she will be charmed with those breeches, fastened to the doublet with aiguillettes; they are enough to make her in love with you; a lover with aiguillettes is a marvellously dainty morsel for her.

*Harp.* You delight me when you say that.

*Fros.* Monsieur, my lawsuit is of the greatest conquence to me. [Harpagon *resumes his grave look.*] I am ruined if I lose it, and a very little help will save me. I wish you could have seen the pleasure she took in hearing me talk of you. [Harpagon *smiles again.*] Joy shone in her eyes, and I brought her, at last, to a state of extreme impatience to have the marriage finally concluded.

*Harp.* You have done me a great service, Frosine; I am, I acknowledge, under the greatest obligation to you.

*Fros.* I beg you, monsieur, to grant me the little assistance that I have asked of you. [Harpagon *looks grave.*] It will set me on my feet again, and I shall be eternally obliged to you.

*Harp.* Adieu; I have my letters to finish.

*Fros.* I assure you, monsieur, you never could relieve a greater need.

*Harp.* I shall order my coach to be ready to take you to the fair.

*Fros.* I would not importune you if I were not forced to do so by sheer necessity.

*Harp.* I shall take care that supper is served early, that none of you be made ill by it.

*Fros.* Do not refuse the favor I solicit. You have no idea, monsieur, the pleasure that—

*Harp.* I must go; they are calling me. Till we meet again.

*Fros.* [*alone*]. May a fever nip you, dog of a villain! the devil's in you! The old skin-flint was proof against every attack. Nevertheless, I sha'n't give up the negotiation. There's the other side; I am pretty sure to get something good out of that.

## ACT III

### Scene I

Harpagon, Cléante, Élise, Valère,
Dame Claude, *holding a broom;*
Maître Jacques, La Merluche,
Brindavoine

*Harp.* Now come here, all of you, that I may give my orders for to-night and regulate the employment of each. Approach, Dame Claude; I'll begin with you. [*She holds a broom.*] I see you come with arms in hand. To you I commit the care of cleaning everything; but be careful, as I have often told you, not to rub the furniture too hard, for fear of wearing it out. Besides this, I appoint you, during supper, to control the bottles; if any of them are broken or get lost, I shall charge the same to you, and deduct the cost from your wages.

*Maître Jacques* [*aside*]. A profitable punishment!

*Harp.* [*to* DAME CLAUDE]. Go.

### SCENE II

HARPAGON, CLÉANTE, ÉLISE, VALÈRE, MAÎTRE JACQUES, LA MERLUCHE, BRINDAVOINE

*Harp.* You, Brindavoine, and you, La Merluche, I place you in charge of rinsing the glasses, and serving the wine; but, serving it only, remember, when the guests are thirsty, and not according to the custom of certain forth-putting lacqueys, who come round enticing persons to drink when they are not thinking of it. Wait till you are asked more than once; and remember to serve a great deal of water.

*Maître J.* [*aside*]. Yes; pure wine gets into the head.

*La Merluche.* Are we to take off our overalls, monsieur?

*Harp.* Yes, when you see the guests arriving; but be careful not to spoil your clothes.

*Brindavoine.* You know, monsieur, that one of the fronts of my doublet has a great spot of lamp oil on it.

*La M.* As for me, monsieur, my breeches have a great hole behind through which can be seen, saving your presence—

*Harp.* Peace! Turn that side cleverly to the wall and present the front of you to the company. [*To* BRINDAVOINE, *showing him how to hold his hat so as to hide the grease-spot.*] And you, hold your hat thus while you serve. Go.

### SCENE III

HARPAGON, CLÉANTE, ÉLISE, VALÈRE, MAÎTRE JACQUES

*Harp.* As for you, my daughter, you will have an eye to what is served, and take care that there is no waste. That's a daughter's part. But, at the same time, I wish you to be prepared to receive my future wife, who is coming here to pay you a visit, and after that you are to go with her to the fair. Do you hear what I am saying to you?

*Élise.* Yes, father.

*Harp.* [*mimicking her*]. Yes, simpleton; go.

### SCENE IV

HARPAGON, CLÉANTE, VALÈRE, MAÎTRE JACQUES

*Harp.* And you, my popinjay son, whom I have the kindness to forgive for your late proceedings, don't take it into your head to turn the cold shoulder to her.

*Clé.* I, father? turn the cold shoulder! and why?

*Harp.* Heavens! don't we all know the way children behave when their parents marry, and the sort of eye with which they view what is called a stepmother? But if you wish me to forget your last escapade, I recommend you to show a friendly face to that young lady and give her the warmest welcome that you can.

*Clé.* If I may speak the truth, father, I cannot promise to be very glad that she is to be my step-mother; I should lie if I said I was. But as for receiving her well, and showing her, as you say, a friendly face, I promise to obey you most scrupulously in that matter.

*Harp.* Take care to do so.

*Clé.* You shall see that you have no ground for complaint.

*Harp.* You will do wisely.

### SCENE V

HARPAGON, VALÈRE, MAÎTRE JACQUES

*Harp.* Valère, help me in this. Now, Maître Jacques, come forward; I have kept you for the last.

*Maître J.* Is it as your coachman, monsieur, or as your cook that you wish to speak to me? Because I am both.

*Harp.* I speak to both.

*Maître J.* But which first?

*Harp.* The cook.

*Maître J.* Then wait, if you please. [*Takes off his coachman's great-coat and appears in a cook's suit.*]

*Harp.* What the deuce is all this ceremony about?

*Maître J.* You have only to issue your orders.

*Harp.* I am obliged, Maître Jacques, to give a supper this evening.

*Maître J.* [*aside*]. What a wonder!

*Harp.* Tell me, can you provide a good one?

*Maître J.* Yes, if you give me enough money.

*Harp.* The devil! always money! It seems as if they never have anything else to say but money, money, money! Ha! the only word they ever have on their lips is money! money! 'Tis their bosom friend and bed-fellow, money!

*Val.* I never heard a more impertinent answer! Fine marvel that of providing a good supper when there's plenty of money! Why, 'tis the easiest thing in the world; there's no poor cook that can't do that much. But for a clever fellow the thing is to provide good eating with little money.

*Maître J.* Good eating with little money!

*Val.* Yes.

*Maître J.* Faith! Mr. Steward, you'd oblige us all very much if you'd make known that secret, and take my place as cook; you meddle here enough as a factotum.

*Harp.* Hold your tongue! What is required?

*Maître J.* Here's your steward, ask him; he'll give you good eating for little money.

*Harp.* Hi! I choose that you shall answer me.

*Maître J.* How many will there be at the table?

*Harp.* Eight or ten; but allow for eight only. When there's enough for eight there's enough for ten.

*Val.* That's so.

*Maître J.* Well, then, you want four large soups and five entrées. Soups, entrées—[1]

*Harp.* What the devil do you mean? That's enough for the whole town.

*Maître J.* A roast—

*Harp.* [*putting a hand over the cook's mouth*]. Traitor! you're making ducks and drakes of my property.

*Maître J.* Side-dishes—

*Harp.* [*again covering his mouth*]. What! more?

*Val.* [*to* Maître Jacques]. Do you want to kill all the guests? Did monsieur invite them here to murder them with victuals. Go and read the precepts of health, and ask your doctor if there's anything more prejudicial to mankind than excess in eating.

*Harp.* He is right.

*Val.* Let me tell you, Maître Jacques, you and your compeers, that a table covered with too much food is a cut-throat; and to be a true friend to invited guests we must have frugality in the meals we provide, and—according to the saying of an ancient classic—"we must eat to live, and not live to eat."

*Harp.* Ah! how well said! Let me embrace you for that saying. 'Tis the noblest sentence I ever heard in my life. "We must live to eat, and not eat to"—no, that isn't it. How did you say it?

*Val.* "We must eat to live, and not live to eat."

*Harp.* [*to* Maître Jacques]. Do you hear that? [*To* Valère.] What great man said it?

*Val.* I can't recollect his name just now.

*Harp.* Remember to write those words down for me. I will have them printed in gilt letters over the chimney-piece in my dining-room.

*Val.* I'll not forget. Now, about your supper; you have only to let me manage it. I will arrange it properly.

*Harp.* Then do so.

*Maître J.* So much the better; I'll be rid of the trouble.

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[1] Soups, entrées: Here, according to the stage tradition, the actor inserts a long list of courses.

*Harp.* [*to* Valère]. You had better have certain things of which persons cannot eat much, and so they are sooner satisfied,—a good greasy stew and a pâté in a pot[1] with plenty of chestnuts. That will be an abundance.

*Val.* Rely upon me.

*Harp.* Now, Maître Jacques, I want my coach cleaned.

*Maître J.* Wait a moment; that is addressed to the coachman. [*Puts on his great coat.*] You were saying—

*Harp.* That you must clean my coach, and get the horses ready to drive to the fair.

*Maître J.* Your horses, monsieur? Faith, they are not in condition to go. I won't say they are in the straw, for the poor beasts haven't any, and 'twould be saying what isn't so; but you have starved them so severely that they are nothing but scarecrows, phantoms, skeletons of horses.

*Harp.* Why should they be ill? They don't do any work.

*Maître J.* Must they go without eating because you don't use them? Poor animals! they had better be made to work much, and fed the same. It breaks my heart to see them nothing but skin and bone; for after all, I love my horses. I feel as if it were myself when I see them suffer. I take the food out of my own mouth for them often; it is too hard-hearted, monsieur, to have no pity on our dumb neighbors.

*Harp.* It won't be hard work for them just to go to the fair.

*Maître J.* Monsieur, I haven't the heart to drive them; and I should be ashamed to strike them with the whip in the state they are in. How do you expect them to drag a coach when they can't drag themselves?

*Val.* [*to* Harpagon]. Monsieur, I'll make neighbor Picard drive them; and he can also help us in getting supper ready.

*Maître J.* So be it; I'd rather they died under another hand than mine.

*Val.* Maître Jacques plays philosopher—

*Maître J.* Mr. Steward plays truckler—

*Harp.* Peace!

*Maître J.* Monsieur, I can't tolerate flatterers. I see what your steward is after,—perpetually keeping account of the bread and wine, the salt and candles; he is only tickling you to get your favor! I'm furious at it; and very sorry every day of my life, to hear what is said of you. For, after all, I do feel a kindness for you in spite of everything, and, after my horses, you are the person in the world whom I like best.

*Harp.* May I be informed by you, Maître Jacques, what people say of me?

*Matîre J.* Yes, monsieur, if I were sure you wouldn't get angry.

*Harp.* I will not, in any way.

*Maître J.* Excuse me, but I know very well I shall put you in a passion.

*Harp.* Not at all. On the contrary, you will give me pleasure. I am glad to know what people say of me.

*Maître J.* Well, monsieur, since you wish it, I will tell you frankly that you are laughed at everywhere. Hundreds of jokes are going the rounds about you; folks like nothing better than to put you in the pillory and tell tales of your stinginess. One says you've had a special almanac printed, with double the number of ember-days and vigils, so as to make more fasts for your household. Another says you always pick a quarrel with your valets about New Year's time, or just when they leave your service, so as to have an excuse for not making them a present. This one declares you summoned your neighbor's cat before the assizes[2] for eating up the scraps of your leg of mutton; and that one says he met you one night stealing the oats of your own horses; and that your coachman (the one before me) gave you, in the darkness, I don't know how many blows with a stick, about which you never ventured to say anything. In short—am I to tell you the whole?—one can't go anywhere that one doesn't find you chopped into mincemeat. You are the talk and laughing-stock of everybody; and no one ever speaks of you by any other name than miser, extortioner, niggard, skin-flint—

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[1] **pâté in a pot:** to save the cost of the crust of the pasty.

[2] **summoned . . . before the assizes:** brought suit against.

*Harp.* [*beating* Maître Jacques]. You are a fool, a scoundrel, a knave, and an impudent rascal!

*Maître J.* There! didn't I guess right? You wouldn't believe me. I warned you I should put you in a passion if I told the truth.

*Harp.* Learn to speak properly. [*Exit*

### Scene VI

Valère, Maître Jacques

*Val.* [*laughing*]. As far as I can see, Maître Jacques, your frankness is rather ill-paid.

*Maître J.* *Morbleu!* Mr. New-comer, who try to play the lord here, it is none of your business. Laugh at your own drubbings when you get them and don't come here and laugh at mine.

*Val.* Ah! Monsieur Maître Jacques, don't be vexed, I beg of you.

*Maître J.* [*aside*]. He's mealy-mouthed! I'll bluster and if he's fool enough to fear me I'll pommel him a bit. [*Aloud.*] Laugh as you please, but let me tell you I don't laugh, not I; and if you get my temper up I'll make *you* laugh on the other side of your mouth. [Maître Jacques *pushes* Valère *to the farther end of the room, threatening him.*]

*Val.* Here, here, gently!

*Maître J.* Ho! gently, is it? I don't choose to be gentle, I don't.

*Val.* I beg of you—

*Maître J.* You are an impudent fellow.

*Val.* Monsieur Maître Jacques—

*Maître J.* There's no Monsieur Maître Jacques for a double-faced sneak. If I take a stick I'll thrash the importance out of you.

*Val.* What! a stick, will you? [Valère *pushes* Maître Jacques *in turn to the wall.*]

*Maître J.* No, no; I didn't say that.

*Val.* Do you know, you saucy fellow, that I'm a man who is likely to give you a good drubbing yourself—

*Maître J.* I don't doubt it.

*Val.* And that you are nothing after all but a poor jack of a coachman?

*Maître J.* I know that.

*Val.* But you don't know me as yet.

*Maître J.* Forgive me!

*Val.* You'll thrash me, will you?

*Maître J.* I said it in joke.

*Val.* Well I don't like your style of joke [*giving* Maître Jacques *some blows with a stick*]. Learn from that that you are a pretty poor jester. [*Exit*

*Maître J.* [*alone*]. Hang sincerity! it is a bad trade; henceforth I renounce it, and I'll never tell the truth again. I don't so much mind my master beating me,—he has some right to do it; but as for that steward, I'll be revenged if I can.

### Scene VII

Mariane, Frosine, Maître Jacques

*Fros.* Do you know if your master is at home, Maître Jacques?

*Maître J.* Yes, he is—as I happen to know too well.

*Fros.* Then tell him, if you please, that we are here.

*Maître J.* [*looking at* Mariane]. Ha! she isn't amiss.

### Scene VIII

Mariane, Frosine

*Mariane.* What a singular position I am in, Frosine; if I may say what I feel, I dread this meeting.

*Fros.* But why? what makes you so uneasy?

*Mar.* Alas! why do you ask it? Can you not conceive the fears of a girl who is on the point of beholding the wretchedness to which persons seek to bind her?

*Fros.* I see that Harpagon, though he may die opportunely, is not the wretchedness which you would like to embrace. Your behavior shows me plainly that the fair young man you have talked to me about is a good deal in your mind.

*Mar.* Yes. I do not wish to deny it, Frosine; the respectful visits which he has paid to us have, I acknowledge, had some effect upon my heart.

*Fros.* Do you know who he is?

*Mar.* No, not in the least. But this I do know: he is made to be loved; and if I could have things my way, I would rather take him for a husband than any other man. I own that he counts for not a little in the dreadful horror I feel at this husband they want to give me.

*Fros.* Oh! goodness; all these fair youths are charming, and talk love-talk mighty well; but most of them are poor as rats. You had much better take an elderly husband who can give you means. I will admit that your senses won't be gratified in the match I propose, and that you may have some little offensiveness to put up with in such a husband. But it won't last long; and his death, I assure you, will leave you in a position to marry a man you like better, and make all things right at last.

*Mar.* Oh! Frosine, what a strange condition of things! In order to be happy I must wish and wait for a person's death! And death does not always come to suit our plans.

*Fros.* Are you jesting? You only marry him on the understanding that you will soon be a widow; it ought to be one of the articles in the contract. He'll be very perverse if he is not dead in three months. Here he comes in person.

*Mar.* Oh! Frosine, what a looking man!

### SCENE IX

HARPAGON, MARIANE, FROSINE

*Harp.* Do not be offended, my fair one, if I come to you in spectacles. I know that your charms are too apparent to the eyes, too visible in themselves, to need spectacles to see them; but it is with glasses that the stars are observed, and I maintain and guarantee that you are a star,—a star indeed, the loveliest star in the whole firmament of stars. Frosine! she makes no answer, and shows, it seems, no joy in seeing me.

*Fros.* Because she is still confused. Besides, girls are ashamed to show at once the feelings of their heart.

*Harp.* You are right. [*To* MARIANE.] Here, fair charmer, is my daughter, who comes to welcome you.

### SCENE X

HARPAGON, ÉLISE, MARIANE, FROSINE

*Mar.* I fear I have too long delayed my visit, madame.

*Élise.* You do, madame, that which I should have done. It was for me to have forestalled your visit.

*Harp.* [*to* MARIANE]. You see how tall she is; but ill weeds grow apace.

*Mar.* [*low to* FROSINE]. Oh! the unpleasant man!

*Harp.* [*to* FROSINE]. What says the beauty?

*Fros.* That she admires you much.

*Harp.* [*to* MARIANE]. You do me too much honor, adorable darling!

*Mar.* [*aside*]. What a vulgar creature!

*Harp.* I am greatly obliged to you for your sentiments.

*Mar.* [*aside*]. I cannot bear this any longer.

### SCENE XI

HARPAGON, MARIANE, ÉLISE, CLÉANTE, VALÈRE, FROSINE, BRINDAVOINE

*Harp.* Here is my son, who comes to pay his duty to you.

*Mar.* [*low to* FROSINE]. Ah! Frosine, what a meeting! 'Tis he of whom I spoke to you!

*Fros.* [*low to* MARIANE]. A marvellous mishap!

*Harp.* I see you are surprised to find that I have grown-up children. But I shall soon dispose of both of them.

*Clé.* [*to* MARIANE]. Madame, to tell the truth, I did not expect these circumstances. My father surprised me not a little when he told me, just now, of the plans that he had formed.

*Mar.* And I may say the same. This unexpected meeting surprises me as much as it does you. I was not prepared for such a circumstance.

*Clé.* 'Tis true that my father, madame, could not have made a finer choice, and that the honor of seeing you is a keen joy to me; but, for all that, I cannot say to you that I rejoice in the plan by which you will become my step-mother. That congratulation, I must confess, I cannot offer; it is a title which, if you please, I do not wish you to possess. This greeting may seem brutal to the eyes of some, but I feel confident that you are one who will take it as I mean it. This is a marriage, madame, to which, as you will readily imagine, I feel a strong repugnance. You cannot be ignorant, knowing who I am, that it comes as a shock to my interests, and you will suffer me to tell you, by permission of my father, that if the matter depended upon me this marriage would not take place.

*Harp.* That is the most impertinent congratulation. What sort of a confession is that to make to her?

*Mar.* And I, in answering you, must say that things are much the same with me. If you feel a repugnance to seeing me your step-mother, I feel no less a one to seeing you my step-son. Do not think, I beg of you, that it was I who sought to give you this disquietude. I should be grieved indeed to cause you pain, and if I were not forced to this proceeding by despotic power, I give you my word I would not consent to a marriage that so grieves you.

*Harp.* She is right. A foolish compliment should be answered in its folly. I beg your pardon, fair one, for my son's impertinence. He's a young fool, who does not know the consequences of the words he utters.

*Mar.* I assure you that what he said has not in the least offended me. On the contrary, by explaining his real feelings he gave me pleasure. I like this frank avowal of them; and if he had spoken otherwise I could not have esteemed him as I do.

*Harp.* It is most kind in you to wish to excuse his faults. Time will bring him wisdom, and you will find his feelings changed ere long.

*Clé.* No, father; my feelings are not capable of change; and I most earnestly entreat madame not to believe they are.

*Harp.* What madness to continue thus!

*Clé.* Would you have me false to my true feelings?

*Harp.* Again! Have you no wish to change your tone?

*Clé.* Well, since you insist upon my speaking in another manner—allow me, madame, to take my father's place and say that I have never seen in all the world a being so charming as yourself. I can conceive of nothing to equal the happiness of pleasing you; the title of your husband is a glory, a felicity I should prefer to the fortunes of the greatest prince on earth. Yes, madame, the happiness of possessing you is, to my thinking, the noblest of all fates; there is nothing I am not capable of doing to win so precious a conquest; and the powerful obstacles—

*Harp.* Gently, gently, if you please, my son.

*Clé.* I am paying these compliments to madame on your account.

*Harp.* *Morbleu!* I have a tongue to pay them for myself; I do not need an interpreter like you. Come, place chairs.

*Fros.* No; we should do best to go to the fair at once, so as to get back sooner, and have more time for the entertainment.

*Harp.* [*to* BRINDAVOINE]. See that the horses are put to.

### SCENE XII

HARPAGON, MARIANE, ÉLISE, CLÉANTE,
VALÈRE, FROSINE

*Harp.* [*to* MARIANE]. I beg you, my fair one, to excuse me for not having thought to offer you a trifling collation before going to the fair.

*Clé.* I have seen to that, father, and have ordered dishes of China oranges, sweet lemons, and confectionery, which I sent for on your account.

*Harp.* [*aside to* VALÈRE]. Valère!

*Val.* He has lost his senses.

*Clé.* Perhaps you are thinking, father, that that is not enough. Madame will have the kindness to excuse it, I am sure.

*Mar.* It was quite unnecessary.

*Clé.* Did you ever see, madame, a more brilliant diamond than the one my father wears on his little finger?

*Mar.* It sparkles brightly.

*Clé.* [*taking the diamond from his father's finger and giving it to* Mariane]. You should see it closer.

*Mar.* It is indeed most beautiful,—of the finest water.

*Clé.* [*placing himself before her when she wishes to return the diamond*]. No, no, madame, it is in too good hands. That is a present which my father makes to you.

*Harp.* [*aside*]. I!

*Clé.* Father, is it not true that you desire madame to keep that diamond for love of you?

*Harp.* [*low to his son*]. What do you mean?

*Clé.* Fine question! [*To* Mariane]. He signs to me to urge you to accept it.

*Mar.* But I do not wish—

*Clé.* [*to* Mariane]. Oh! you are jesting: he does not wish to take it back.

*Harp.* [*aside*]. I'm mad with rage!

*Mar.* It would be—

*Clé.* [*still preventing* Mariane *from returning it*]. No, no, I tell you; you will offend him.

*Mar.* I entreat—

*Clé.* No, no!

*Harp.* [*aside*]. A pestilence upon him!

*Clé.* See! he is scandalized by your refusal.

*Harp.* [*low to his son*]. Ah, traitor!

*Clé.* [*to* Mariane]. Notice how hurt he is.

*Harp.* [*low to his son, threatening him*]. Torturer!

*Clé.* Father, 'tis not my fault; I have done my best to make her keep it, but she is obstinate.

*Harp.* [*low to his son, threatening him*]. Robber!

*Clé.* [*to* Mariane]. You have made my father angry with me, madame.

*Harp.* [*low to his son, same gestures*]. Scoundrel!

*Clé.* [*to* Mariane]. I fear he will be ill; for Heaven's sake, madame, refuse no longer.

*Fros.* [*to* Mariane]. Heavens! what a fuss! do keep the ring, since monsieur wishes it.

*Mar.* [*to* Harpagon]. In order not to anger you I keep the diamond, and I will take some other time to give it back.

## Scene XIII

Harpagon, Mariane, Élise, Cléante, Valère, Frosine, Brindavoine

*Brind.* Monsieur, here is a man who wants to speak to you.

*Harp.* Tell him I am engaged, and let him call another time.

*Brind.* He says he has some money for you.

*Harp.* [*to* Mariane]. I beg you to excuse me; I will return immediately.

## Scene XIV

Harpagon, Mariane, Élise, Cléante, Valère, Frosine, La Merluche

*La M.* [*rushing in knocks down* Harpagon]. Monsieur—

*Harp.* Ah! I am killed!

*Clé.* What is it, father? Have you hurt yourself?

*Harp.* That traitor is bribed by my debtors to break my neck!

*Val.* [*to* Harpagon]. You are not much hurt.

*La M.* [*to* Harpagon]. Monsieur, I beg your pardon; I thought I ought to come in haste to tell you—

*Harp.* What, you brute?

*La M.* That the horses have lost their shoes.

*Harp.* Then take them quickly to the blacksmith.

*Clé.* And while we wait to have them shod, father, I'll do the honors of the house, on your behalf, and show the lady to the garden, where the collation shall be served.

## Scene XV

Harpagon, Valère

*Harp.* Valère! I pray you give an eye to that. Save all you can; return it to the dealers.

*Val.* Enough!

*Harp.* Oh, insolent son! does he want to ruin me?

## ACT IV

### SCENE I

CLÉANTE, MARIANE, ÉLISE, FROSINE

*Clé.* Let us come in, we shall be better here. There are no suspicious persons about, and we can talk more freely.

*Élise* [*to* MARIANE]. Yes, my brother has confided to me the passion that he feels for you. I know the grief and the unpleasantness such obstacles are capable of causing us; and it is, I do assure you, with the utmost tenderness that I interest myself in your affairs.

*Mar.* It is indeed sweet comfort when a friend like you takes interest in me; and I entreat you to give me ever that generous affection, which is so capable of softening the hardships of my fate.

*Fros.* You are, I must say, most unlucky persons, both of you, not to have told me, before this happened, how matters stood. I could, no doubt, have saved you from this mischance and not have brought things to the point at which they are.

*Clé.* How could we help it? My evil destiny has willed this thing. But, fairest Mariane, what resolutions have you made?

*Mar.* Alas! have I the power of making any? Dependent as I am, what can I make but wishes?

*Clé.* Then have I no support within your heart but wishes? Is there no tender pity; no helpful charity; no active love?

*Mar.* What can I say to you? Put yourself in my place, and see what I can do. Advise me, order me. I trust myself to you; for I think you too right-minded to exact from me that which is not allowed by honor and propriety.

*Clé.* Alas! to what am I reduced when you restrain me to the vexing sentiments of rigorous honor and scrupulous propriety!

*Mar.* But what do you wish that I should do? Though I might disregard, myself, a number of those restrictions by which my sex is bound, I must have some consideration for my mother. She has brought me up with never-failing tenderness, and I could never bring myself to give her pain. Do all you can with her; employ your utmost efforts to win her sanction. You may do and say all that you please, and if success depends on my declaring what I feel for you I will consent to make her an avowal of my sentiments.

*Clé.* Frosine, my good Frosine, will you not help us?

*Fros.* Good faith! why ask? I'll do it with all my heart. By nature, as you know, I'm pretty human. Heaven didn't make me with a soul of iron; I am, indeed, too tenderly disposed to render little services to those who love each other honorably. What can be done about it?

*Clé.* Think, I entreat you.

*Mar.* Throw light upon our difficulty.

*Élise.* Find some way to undo that which you did.

*Fros.* 'Tis difficult. [*To* MARIANE.] As for your mother, she is far from being unreasonable; perhaps we could win her over to transfer to the son the gift she is making to the father. [*To* CLÉANTE.] But the real trouble that I see is—that your father is your father.

*Clé.* That is certain.

*Fros.* [*to* MARIANE]. I mean by that, he will be full of spite if you show that you reject him, and he would never, after that, consent to the marriage. The safest way to do is to make the rejection come from him. Try, by every possible means, to disgust him with your person.

*Clé.* You are right.

*Fros.* Yes, I am right, for I know him well. That is the only way to manage him; but 'tis the deuce and all to find a means. Wait! suppose we found a woman about my age and with my talents, actress enough to counterfeit a dame of quality by means of a train, made in all haste, and some queer name of countess or of marchioness from Lower Brittany! I've enough persuasion to make your father think that she possesses, beside her mansions, a hundred thousand crowns in current money, and that she is so mad in love with him and so desirous to be his wife that she is ready to give him all her property by marriage contract. I've not a doubt he'll lend an ear to such a prospect; for, though I know he loves you well, he loves his money better. If when dazzled by this bait, he gives consent to your affair, it matters little how or when he learns the truth about his marchioness.

*Clé.* That's well thought of!

*Fros.* Then let me carry it out. I've just bethought me of a friend of mine who'll suit our purpose.

*Clé.* If you succeed, you may be certain, Frosine, of my gratitude. But, charming Mariane, let us begin, I beg of you, by winning your mother to our side; it will at least be something to break off this marriage. Make every effort that you can; use all the power that her affection gives you; display, without reserve, those eloquent graces, those all-powerful charms that Heaven has placed upon your lips and in your eyes. Neglect not, I entreat you, to use the tender words, the gentle prayers, the sweet caresses to which, I am persuaded, nothing can be refused.

*Mar.* I will do all I can, neglecting nothing.

### Scene II

Harpagon, Cléante, Mariane, Élise, Frosine

*Harp.* [*aside and unseen*]. Ha! what? My son kissing the hand of his intended step-mother! and his intended step-mother making no remonstrance! Can there be some mystery beneath all this?

*Élise.* Here comes my father.

*Harp.* The coach is ready; you can start when you please.

*Clé.* If you are not going, father, I will attend these ladies.

*Harp.* No, stay here. They can very well go alone, and I want you.

### Scene III

Harpagon, Cléante, Valère

*Harp.* Now, my son, question of step-mother apart, what do you think yourself of that young person?

*Clé.* What do I think?

*Harp.* Yes; of her air, her figure, her beauty, her wit?

*Clé.* Oh! la, la.

*Harp.* But answer me.

*Clé.* Well, to speak frankly, I have not found her what I thought she was. Her air is that of a downright coquette, her figure rather awkward, her beauty only middling, and her mind of the commonest. Don't think that I say this, father, to disgust you with her; step-mother for step-mother I'd as soon have her as another.

*Harp.* But you were telling her just now—

*Clé.* I was only saying in your name a few soft things; I did it to please you.

*Harp.* Then you don't feel any inclination for her?

*Clé.* I? none at all.

*Harp.* I am sorry; for that ends a thought which came into my mind. Seeing her here, among you all, I made a few reflections on my age; I felt that others might find much to say against my marrying so young a girl. This consideration made me willing to drop the matter; but, as I had asked her of her mother and pledged my word, I thought of giving her to you, not knowing of your aversion.

*Clé.* To me?

*Harp.* To you.

*Clé.* In marriage?

*Harp.* In marriage.

*Clé.* Well, listen, father; 'tis true she's little to my taste, but—to please you—I will bring myself to marry her, if you wish it.

*Harp.* No, I am more reasonable than you think me; I will not force your inclinations.

*Clé.* Excuse me, but I am ready to make this effort for your sake.

*Harp.* No, no, my son; marriages without inclination are never happy.

*Clé.* That may come later, father. Love, they say, is often the fruit of marriage.

*Harp.* No; on the man's side nothing should be risked in these affairs; distressing consequences follow, for which

I will not make myself responsible. If you had felt an inclination for her, 'twere well and good; but that not being so, I shall follow my first intention and marry her myself.

*Clé.* Father, since matters have come to this, I must declare my heart and reveal to you our secret. The truth is I have loved her since first I met her on the Promenade. My intention was to ask you, this very day, to obtain her as my wife; the declaration of your sentiments and a fear of your displeasure alone withheld me.

*Harp.* Have you paid her any visits?

*Clé.* Yes, father.

*Harp.* Often?

*Clé.* Several,—for the time that has elapsed.

*Harp.* Did they receive you well?

*Clé.* Very well; though without knowing who I am. That is why Mariane showed so much surprise on seeing me.

*Harp.* Have you declared your passion and the intention you have formed of marrying her?

*Clé.* Of course; and I have even made some overtures to her mother.

*Harp.* Did she listen, on her daughter's account, to your proposal?

*Clé.* Yes, most civilly.

*Harp.* And the daughter returns your love?

*Clé.* If I may trust appearances, I am persuaded, father, that she feels a fondness for me.

*Harp.* [*low to* VALÈRE]. I am glad to have learned this secret; it is just what I was trying to discover. [*Aloud.*] Now, my son, do you know what you must do? You must give your mind, if you please, to getting rid of this love of yours; you must cease all attentions to the lady I intend for myself, and you must marry, at once, the person I have picked out for you.

*Clé.* Ha! is it thus you trick me? Very good; since things have come to this, I declare to you that I will never relinquish the love I feel for Mariane; there is no extremity to which I will not go to win her from you; and if you have, on your side, the consent of her mother, I have on mine other supports which will fight against you.

*Harp.* What! scoundrel, do you dare to cross my path?

*Clé.* 'Tis you who stand in mine; I was the first in date.

*Harp.* Am I not your father, and do you not owe me all respect?

*Clé.* Sons are not bound to defer to a father's will in things of this kind. Love is no respecter of persons.

*Harp.* I will make you respect me, with a stout stick.

*Clé.* I care nothing for your threats.

*Harp.* You shall renounce Mariane.

*Clé.* I will not.

*Harp.* [*calling out*]. A stick! bring me a stick!

### SCENE IV

HARPAGON, CLÉANTE, VALÈRE, MAÎTRE JACQUES

*Maître J.* Hey, hey, hey! messieurs; what's all this? What are you thinking about?

*Clé.* I scorn it all.

*Maître J.* [*to* CLÉANTE]. Ah! monsieur, gently.

*Harp.* To talk to me with such insolence!

*Maître J.* [*to* HARPAGON]. Ah! monsieur, for pity's sake!

*Clé.* I shall not give way an inch.

*Maître J.* [*to* CLÉANTE]. What! not to your father?

*Harp.* Let me get at him!

*Maître J.* What! to your son? Wasn't it enough to thrash me?

*Harp.* I'll make you the judge of this affair, Maître Jacques, to prove I'm right.

*Maître J.* So be it. [*To* CLÉANTE.] Step aside, if you please.

*Harp.* I love a young woman whom I mean to marry; and this scoundrel has the insolence to love her himself, and court her against my orders.

*Maître J.* Ah! he is wrong.

*Harp.* Is it not a fearful thing that a son should enter into rivalry with his father? And ought he not, out of mere respect, to abstain from interfering with my affections?

*Maître J.* You are right. Stay where you are and let me talk with him.

*Clé.* [*to* MAÎTRE JACQUES, *who goes to him*]. Well, if he is willing to take you as the judge between us I won't hold back. I don't care who is judge, and I am willing to refer our differences to you, Maître Jacques.

*Maître J.* You do me much honor.

*Clé.* I am in love with a young lady, who responds to my affection, receiving the pledges of my faith most tenderly, and my father must needs come and interfere with our love by making her an offer himself.

*Maître J.* He was undoubtedly wrong.

*Clé.* Ought he not to be ashamed, at his age, to think of marrying? Is it becoming of him to be in love? should he not leave such occupations to younger men?

*Maître J.* You are right. He is foolish. Let me say two words to him alone. [*Goes back to* HARPAGON.] Well, your son is not so obstinate as you think; he can be brought to reason. He says he knows the respect he owes you; he was carried away by his excitement, but he will not refuse to submit to your wishes, provided you will treat him more liberally than you do now, and will give him some other person in marriage with whom he can feel satisfied.

*Harp.* Ah! tell him that in that case, Maître Jacques, he may expect everything from me; and I leave him to choose any woman in marriage whom he pleases, except Mariane.

*Maître J.* Very good; let me manage it. [*Goes to* CLÉANTE.] Well, your father is not so unreasonable as you make him out. He tells me it was your violence that made him angry. It was only your way of proceeding that he disliked, and he is quite ready to agree to what you wish, provided you will behave more gently and treat him with the respect, deference, and submission which a son ought to show to his father.

*Clé.* Ah! Maître Jacques, you can assure him that if he will give me Mariane he shall find me the most submissive of men; and I will never do anything against his wishes.

*Maître J.* [*to* HARPAGON]. I have settled it; he consents to all you say.

*Harp.* Nothing could be better.

*Maître J.* [*to* CLÉANTE]. All is arranged; he is satisfied with your promises.

*Clé.* Heaven be praised!

*Maître J.* Messieurs, you can talk together now, because you are agreed; you were about to quarrel simply for want of understanding each other.

*Clé.* My good Maître Jacques, I shall be grateful to you all my life.

*Maître J.* It is not worth mentioning, monsieur.

*Harp.* You have given me pleasure, Maître Jacques, and you deserve some reward. [HARPAGON *feels in his pocket,* MAÎTRE JACQUES *holds out his hand; but* HARPAGON *only pulls out his handkerchief, saying,*] I shall remember it, I assure you.

*Maître J.* Your humble servant, monsieur.

### SCENE V

HARPAGON, CLÉANTE

*Clé.* I beg your pardon, father, for the anger which I showed.

*Harp.* That's all over.

*Clé.* I assure you that I feel the utmost regret.

*Harp.* And I feel the utmost joy in finding you so reasonable.

*Clé.* How good of you to forget my fault so quickly.

*Harp.* A father readily forgets the faults of his children when they return to their duty.

*Clé.* Then you feel no resentment for my violent language?

*Harp.* You compel me not to do so by the respect and submission which you show.

*Clé.* I promise you, father, that I will keep the remembrance of your goodness in my heart until I die.

*Harp.* And on my part I promise you that there is nothing you shall not obtain from me.

*Clé.* Ah! father, I can ask you nothing more. It is enough that you give me Mariane.

*Harp.* What?

*Clé.* I say, father, that I am quite content. I find all things in the goodness that bestows my Mariane upon me.

*Harp.* Who talked of bestowing Mariane upon you?

*Clé.* You, father.

*Harp.* I?

*Clé.* Why, of course.

*Harp.* What's all this? You promised to renounce her.

*Clé.* I! renounce her!

*Harp.* Yes.

*Clé.* Never!

*Harp.* You have not given up your claim to her?

*Clé.* On the contrary, I hold to it more than ever.

*Harp.* What! again, you scoundrel?

*Clé.* Nothing can change me.

*Harp.* Let me get at you, traitor!

*Clé.* Do what you please.

*Harp.* I forbid you to come into my sight again!

*Clé.* So much the better.

*Harp.* I discard you!

*Clé.* Discard me.

*Harp.* I renounce you as my son!

*Clé.* So be it.

*Harp.* I disinherit you!

*Clé.* As you please.

*Harp.* I lay my curse upon you! [*Exit*

*Clé.* [*calling after him*]. I don't care for your curses.

## Scene VI

### Cléante, La Flèche

*La F.* [*coming from the garden with a casket in his hand*]. Ah! monsieur, I've met you in the nick of time. Follow me, quick!

*Clé.* What is it?

*La F.* Follow me, I tell you. We are in luck.

*Clé.* How?

*La F.* Here's your chance.

*Clé.* What?

*La F.* I've had my eye on this all day.

*Clé.* What is it?

*La F.* Your father's coffer which I've captured.

*Clé.* How did you manage it?

*La F.* You shall know all. Let's get away; I hear him shouting.

## Scene VII

*Harp.* [*coming from the garden without his hat and shouting*]. Robbers! robbers! thieves! murderers! Justice, great Heaven! I'm lost! I'm murdered! They've cut my throat! They've stolen my money! Who did it? What became of him? Where is he? Where has he hidden himself? What shall I do? Where shall I go?—or not go? That way?—this way? Who is it? Stop! [*Seizing himself by the arm.*] Give me my money, villain! Ah! 'tis I. My mind is so troubled I don't know where I am, or who I am, or what I do. Alas! my poor money! my poor money! my friend, my dear friend!—have they deprived me of you? If you are taken from me I have lost my all,—my support, my consolation, my joy! Life is ended for me! I have nothing more to do in this world. Without you I cannot live. All is over with me. I can bear no more. Let me die! I am dead—I am buried. Will no one restore my money? or restore my life by telling me where it is? Hey! what did you say? No one spoke; there's no one here. Whoever did it must have watched his time and taken just the moment when I was talking to that traitor of a son. Let me get out. I must call the police, and have the house searched, and everybody examined,—servants, valets, son, daughter, and myself. I see them there, all assembled! I suspect them all; they all look to me like thieves. Hey! what's that they are talking about?—the man who robbed me? What's that noise overhead? Can he be hiding there? For pity's sake, all of you, if you know anything about that robber tell me, tell me! Isn't he hiding down there among you? They are staring at me, and laughing. It will be found, I know, that they had some share in the robbery. Come, come! police! archers! provosts!

judges! rack! torture! gibbet! hangman! I'll hang the whole of them, and if I don't recover my money I'll hang myself.

## ACT V

### Scene I

Harpagon, a Commissary of Police

*Commissary.* Let me act in this affair. I know my business, thank God. It is no new matter for me to hunt up thieves; I wish I had as many sacks of a thousand francs as I have hung robbers.

*Harp.* It is the interest of all magistrates to take this matter up; for if they don't enable me to get back my money, I'll take the law of the law.

*Commiss.* We shall employ all requisite proceedings. How much did you say was in that casket?

*Harp.* Ten thousand crowns to a penny.

*Commiss.* Ten thousand crowns!

*Harp.* [*in tears*]. Ten thousand crowns.

*Commiss.* The theft is considerable.

*Harp.* There's no torture great enough for the enormity of this crime. If it remains unpunished the most sacred things are no longer safe.

*Commiss.* What coin was the sum in?

*Harp.* Good louis-d'ors, and pistoles of full weight.

*Commiss.* Whom do you suspect of the robbery?

*Harp.* Everybody; and I wish you to put the whole town and suburbs under arrest.

*Commiss.* We must be careful not to frighten persons, but try to get proof quietly; after which, we can proceed by rigorous measures to the recovery of the sum which has been stolen from you.

### Scene II

Harpagon, Commissary of Police, Maître Jacques

*Maître J.* [*entering and speaking back to some one without*]. I'll be back presently; meantime cut his throat, roast his feet, put him in boiling water, and hang him from the rafters.

*Harp.* Who? The man who robbed me?

*Maître J.* I'm talking of a sucking pig your steward has sent in for the supper, and I wish to cook it to my fancy.

*Commiss.* [*to* Maître Jacques]. Don't be alarmed; I'm not a man to accuse you unjustly; matters will be managed very quietly.

*Maître J.* [*to* Harpagon]. Is monsieur coming to your supper?

*Commiss.* You must hide nothing from your master, my good friend.

*Maître J.* Faith! monsieur, I'll show him what I can do, and treat you all to the best of my powers.

*Harp.* That's not it.

*Maître J.* And if I don't give you as good cheer as I might it is the fault of that steward of yours, who clips my wings with the scissors of his economy.

*Harp.* Traitor! the matter isn't about your supper. I insist on your telling me where my money is, the money that has been stolen from me.

*Maître J.* Money! stolen from you?

*Harp.* Yes, you rascal; and I'll have you hanged if you don't give it up.

*Commiss.* [*to* Harpagon]. Don't maltreat him, for Heaven's sake. I see by his face that he is an honest man, and will tell you what you want to know without being put in prison. Yes, my friend, if you confess this thing no harm shall come to you, and you will be properly rewarded by your master. His money has been stolen; and it isn't possible but what you have some knowledge of the affair.

*Maître J.* [*aside*]. Here's my chance for revenge on that steward. Ever since he entered this house he's the favorite; they won't take any advice but his; and I don't forget the drubbing I got just now.

*Harp.* What are you muttering about?

*Commiss.* [*to* Harpagon]. Let him alone; he is preparing to do as you wish. I told you he was an honest man.

*Maître J.* Monsieur, if you want me to tell you the truth, it is this: I think your dear steward has served you this trick.

*Harp.* Valère!

*Maître J.* Yes.

*Harp.* He who has seemed so faithful to me!

*Maître J.* Himself. I think it is he who robbed you.

*Harp.* On what grounds do you think so?

*Maître J.* Grounds?

*Harp.* Yes.

*Maître J.* I think so—by what I think.

*Commiss.* But it is necessary to let us know what evidence you have.

*Harp.* Have you seen him prowling round the place where I put my money?

*Maître J.* Yes, that I have. Where did you keep it?

*Harp.* In the garden.

*Maître J.* Precisely. I have often seen him prowling in the garden. What was the money in?

*Harp.* A casket.

*Maître J.* Exactly. I have seen him with a casket.

*Harp.* And that casket, what was it like? I shall know at once if it is mine.

*Maître J.* How was it made?

*Harp.* Yes.

*Maître J.* Well, it was made—made like a casket.

*Commiss.* Of course; that's understood. But describe it, if you please.

*Maître J.* It was a large casket.

*Harp.* Mine was small.

*Maître J.* Well, yes, if you take it that way; small in size, but I call it large for what it contained.

*Commiss.* What color was it?

*Maître J.* What color?

*Commiss.* Yes.

*Maître J.* It was the color of—well, some particular color; can't you help me to the name?

*Harp.* Eugh!

*Maître J.* Wasn't it red?

*Harp.* No, gray.

*Maître J.* Yes, that's it; gray-red,—exactly what I meant to say.

*Harp.* No doubt of it, that's my casket assuredly. [*To the* COMMISSARY.] Monsieur, write down his deposition. Good God! whom shall I trust in future? We can swear by nothing in this world! After this, I could believe that I might rob myself.

*Maître J.* [*to* HARPAGON]. Monsieur, here he comes now. Be sure you don't tell him it was I who told you this.

### SCENE III

HARPAGON, COMMISSARY, VALÈRE, MAÎTRE JACQUES

HARP. [*to* VALÈRE]. Come here, and confess this infamous deed, this most horrible act that was ever committed.

*Val.* What do you mean, monsieur?

*Harp.* Do you not blush for your crime, traitor?

*Val.* What crime are you speaking of?

*Harp.* What crime am I speaking of, wretch? As if you did not know what I mean! In vain do you pretend to disguise it; the truth is known; I have just heard all. To abuse my kindness in such a way! To foist yourself into my house in order to betray me, and to serve me a trick of so villainous a nature!

*Val.* Monsieur, if you have indeed heard all, I will make no evasions; I will not deny the matter.

*Maître J.* [*aside*]. Ho! ho! did I guess right without knowing it?

*Val.* It was my intention to speak to you; I was waiting for a favorable conjunction of circumstances. But, as things have happened, I can only conjure you not to be angry and to listen to my reasons.

*Harp.* What fine reasons can you give, pray, you infamous thief?

*Val.* Ah! monsieur, I do not deserve such names. 'Tis true I have committed an offence toward you; but, after all, the fault is pardonable.

*Harp.* What! pardonable? A stealthy crime! a killing blow of that kind!

*Val.* For Heaven's sake, don't get angry. When you have heard me out you will see that the harm is not so great as you may think it.

*Harp.* Not so great as I may think it! What! to rob me of my blood, my very vitals, villain!

*Val.* Your blood, monsieur, has not fallen into unworthy hands. I come of a stock which cannot harm it; and there is nothing in all this I am not able to repair.

*Harp.* It is my intention that you shall; you must at once make restitution of all that you have stolen.

*Val.* Your honor, monsieur, shall be fully satisfied.

*Harp.* There is no question of honor in all this. But tell me, if you please, who led you to such an action?

*Val.* Ah! how can you ask that question?

*Harp.* I do ask it.

*Val.* A god, who bears his own excuse for what he does,—Love.

*Harp.* Love?

*Val.* Yes.

*Harp.* Fine love! fine love, i' faith! A love of my louis-d'ors.

*Val.* No, monsieur, no! 'twas not your wealth which tempted me; that does not dazzle me, and I protest that I care nothing for your other riches if you will leave me that which I have won.

*Harp.* No! by all the devils, I'll do no such thing! Leave it to you? No! What insolence to wish to keep the thing he stole!

*Val.* Do you call that stealing?

*Harp.* Do I call it stealing? a treasure such as that!

*Val.* A treasure indeed; and the most precious that you have, undoubtedly; but it is not losing it to let me keep it. I ask it on my knees, that treasure full of charm. Indeed, you must bestow it on me now.

*Harp.* I shall not do so. Why, what talk is this?

*Val.* We have pledged our mutual faith; we have sworn never to be parted.

*Harp.* An amazing oath indeed! a most ludicrous promise!

*Val.* Yes, we are bound to each other —forever.

*Harp.* And I'll prevent it, you may be sure of that.

*Val.* Nothing but death can separate us.

*Harp.* You are devilishly set upon my money.

*Val.* I have already told you, monsieur, that your money is not the interest that led me to do as I have done. My heart has not been moved by the springs you think. A nobler motive has inspired me.

*Harp.* He'll say 'twas Christian charity that made him steal my property! But I'll settle him now! The law, bold villain, shall do justice on you.

*Val.* You may do what you will with me; I am ready to bear what violence you please; but this I beg you to remember: if there is any wrong in this affair 'tis mine alone; your daughter has in nowise been to blame.

*Harp.* I should think not, verily! 'Twould be strange, indeed, if my daughter were involved in crime. But I want my treasure; and you must now confess where you have taken it.

*Val.* Taken it? Why, she is in your house.

*Harp.* [*aside*]. Oh! my dear casket![1] [*Aloud.*] Still in my house, you say?

*Val.* Yes, monsieur.

*Harp.* Ah! but you must have tampered with—

*Val.* [*vehemently*]. I! monsieur? tamper with her? What wrong you do to both of us! 'Tis with the purest, most respectful ardor that I burn—

*Harp.* [*aside*]. Burns for my casket!

*Val.* I'd rather die than manifest the least offensive thought; your treasure is too good, too virtuous for that.

*Harp.* [*aside*]. My casket virtuous!

*Val.* All my desires have, hitherto, been limited to sight; and nothing evil has profaned the passion those fine eyes have inspired.

*Harp.* [*aside*]. The fine eyes of my casket! He talks like a lover of his mistress.

*Val.* Monsieur, Dame Claude knows the whole truth, and she can testify—

*Harp.* What! my servant an accomplice in this deed?

*Val.* Yes, she was witness of our pledge. When she saw how honest was my love, she helped me to persuade your daughter to give me her troth and to take mine.

*Harp.* [*aside*]. Hey! can fear of the law have turned his brain? [*To* VALÈRE].

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[1] **casket**: In French the word for *casket* (*cassette*) and *daughter* (*fille*) are both feminine. Compare *Aulularia*, lines 735 ff (page 83).

Why do you mix my daughter's name in this?

*Val.* Monsieur, I say that I have had the utmost difficulty in persuading her modesty to accept my love.

*Harp.* Whose modesty?

*Val.* Why, your daughter's. 'Twas only yesterday that she at last consented to agree to our mutual promise of marriage.

*Harp.* My daughter has given you a promise of marriage?

*Val.* Yes, monsieur; and I have given the same to her.

*Harp.* Good heavens! another shock!

*Maître J.* [*to the* COMMISSARY]. Write it down, monsieur, write it all down.

*Harp.* Increase of misery! additional despair! [*To the* COMMISSARY.] Come, monsieur, do the duty of your office. Make out the complaint against him as a thief and a seducer.

*Maître J.* Yes, a thief and a seducer.

*Val.* Those are terms that do not apply to me; and when you all know who I am—

### SCENE IV

HARPAGON, ÉLISE, MARIANE, VALÈRE, FROSINE, THE COMMISSARY, MAÎTRE JACQUES

*Harp.* Ah! shameless daughter! unworthy of a father such as I; is it thus you put in practice the lessons I have taught you? You suffer yourself to fall in love with a vile thief! You pledge your word to a rascal without asking my consent! Well, you are both mistaken in your hopes. [*To* ÉLISE.] Four good walls will guard your future conduct; [*to* VALÈRE] and a stout gibbet, villain, will pay for your audacity.

*Val.* Your passions, happily, cannot pass judgment upon this affair. The law will hear my side before condemning me.

*Harp.* I was wrong to say a gibbet; you shall die by torture on the rack.

*Élise* [*flinging herself at her father's feet*]. Ah! father, have some human feeling; do not drive things to the worst with all the force of your paternal power. Take time to think what you had better do, instead of yielding to the first impulse of your passion. Be willing to examine him with whom you are now so angry. He is quite other than as you see him. You will not think it strange that I have pledged myself to marry him when you know that without his succor you would have lost your daughter. Yes, father, it was he who saved me from that great peril which, as you know, I met with on the water; to him I owe my life and—

*Harp.* All that is nothing; far better had it been to let you drown than do what he has done.

*Élise.* Father! I implore you by paternal love—

*Harp.* No, no, I say. I will hear nothing. The law must do its duty.

*Maître J.* [*aside*]. My thrashing's paid for.

*Fros.* [*aside*]. What an extraordinary complication!

### SCENE V

ANSELME, HARPAGON, ÉLISE, MARIANE, FROSINE, VALÈRE, THE COMMISSARY, MAÎTRE JACQUES

*Anselme.* What is the matter, Seigneur Harpagon? you seem disturbed.

*Harp.* Ah! Seigneur Anselme, you see in me the most unfortunate of men; trouble and disaster have befallen the marriage contract you have come to sign. I have been stabbed in property, stabbed in honor! Here is a traitor, a wretch, who has violated the most sacred laws; who has wormed his way into my house, in the guise of a servant, to rob me of my money and seduce my daughter.

*Val.* Who dreams of your money, which you fling in my face?

*Harp.* They have given each other promises of marriage. The affront is to you, Seigneur Anselme. It is you who ought to take the law upon him and incur the costs of bringing him to justice, in order to avenge this insolence toward you.

*Ans.* It is not my intention to marry any one by force, or to claim a heart which is given to another. But as for your interests I am ready to take those up, as well as my own.

*Harp.* Monsieur here is a very worthy Commissary of Police who neglects, he tells me, none of the functions of his office. [*To the* COMMISSARY, *motioning to* VALÈRE.] Accuse him, monsieur; and make the charge as criminal as possible.

*Val.* I do not see what crime can be made of the love I bear your daughter, nor how you believe I can be punished for an engagement of marriage with her. When you know who I am—

*Harp.* I scorn such tales. Society in our day is full of noble swindlers, impostors, who take advantage of some accident, and insolently cloak themselves with the first illustrious name that comes into their head.

*Val.* I would have you know that my honor is far too sound to let me deck myself with any name or anything that is not mine. All Naples can bear testimony to my birth.

*Ans.* Not so fast, if you please. Be careful what you say. You risk far more than you think for; you are speaking before a man to whom all Naples is well known, and who can easily see through any tale you may invent.

*Val.* [*putting on his hat with dignity*]. I am not a man who has anything to fear. If Naples is well known to you, you know the name of Don Thomas di Alburchi.

*Ans.* Undoubtedly I know him; few men have known him better.

*Harp.* What do I care for Don Thomas or Don Martin?[1] [*Seeing two candles lighted, blows out one.*]

*Ans.* For Heaven's sake, let him speak; we shall then know what he has to say.

*Val.* I have to say that it was he who gave me birth.

*Ans.* He?

*Val.* Yes.

*Ans.* Go! you are jesting. Find some other tale to serve your purpose better, and do not try to save yourself by such imposture.

*Val.* Speak more civilly. It is not imposture. I make no claim I cannot prove.

*Ans.* What! do you dare to call yourself the son of Thomas di Alburchi?

*Val.* Yes, I dare; and I am ready to maintain that truth against whoever questions it.

*Ans.* His audacity is amazing! Learn, to your confusion, that sixteen years ago, the man you speak of perished at sea, with his wife and children, whom he was seeking to remove from the cruel persecutions which followed the uprising in Naples,[2]—persecutions which have caused the exile of many noble families.

*Val.* Yes; but learn, to your confusion, that his son, then seven years old, was saved with his old servant from the wreck by a Spanish vessel; and this son is he who speaks to you. I was that child. The captain of the vessel, touched by my misfortunes, took pity on me; he brought me up as his own son, and put me in the army as soon as I was capable of bearing arms. Learn also that I have lately heard my father is not dead. Passing through this city on my way to find him, an accident, by Heaven designed, enabled me to see the charming Élise. That sight made me a slave forever to her loveliness. The violence of my love and the severity of her father led me to introduce myself into this house and send another person in search of my lost parents.

*Ans.* What proofs have you, beyond your word, which may assure us that this is not a fable based upon some truth?

*Val.* My proofs are in the Spanish captain, who still lives; in a ruby seal which was my father's; an agate bracelet fastened by my mother on my arm, and my old Pedro, the servant who was saved as I was from the wreck.

*Mar.* Ah! I can answer for your words; this is no fraud, and all you say proves clearly that you are my brother.

*Val.* You, my sister?

*Mar.* Yes. My heart was stirred the moment that I heard your voice; our mother, whose joy you now will make, has told me a thousand times of the misfortunes of our family. Heaven did not let us perish in that shipwreck, but it saved our lives at the cost of liberty. We were picked up by pirates, my mother and I, from a fragment of the vessel. After ten years of slavery a happy accident gave us our freedom; we returned to Naples, where we found our property all sold and nothing known about our father. From there we went to Genoa, where my mother recovered some small remnant of her patrimony, which others had squandered; and then we came to these parts, where she now lives a languishing life that is scarcely living.

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[1] **Don Martin:** a common name for a donkey.

[2] **uprisings in Naples:** Masaniello's rebellion in 1647–48.

*Ans.* O Heaven! how marvellous are the signs of thy power! and how plainly dost thou show us that to thee alone belongs the right of doing miracles. Come, my children, to my arms, and join your joyful raptures to those of your father.

*Val.* You, our father?

*Mar.* Is it for you my mother has wept so long?

*Ans.* Yes, my daughter; yes, my son. I am Don Thomas di Alburchi, whom Heaven rescued from the sea with all his property, and who, believing wife and children dead these sixteen years, was now about to seek in marriage with a sweet and virtuous girl the consolations of another family. The dangers to my life in Naples made me renounce that place forever, and, having sold the property I owned there, I have settled here under the name of Anselme; endeavoring to forget the griefs of which my other name was ever a reminder.

*Harp.* [*pointing to* VALÈRE]. Is this your son?

*Ans.* Yes.

*Harp.* Then I make you responsible for the payment of ten thousand crowns of which he has robbed me.

*Ans.* He! robbed you?

*Harp.* Yes, he himself.

*Val.* Who told you that?

*Harp.* Maître Jacques.

*Val.* [*to* MAÎTRE JACQUES]. Do you say that of me?

*Maître J.* You see that I say nothing.

*Harp.* Here is the Commissary of Police who took his deposition.

*Val.* Can you think me capable of so base an action?

*Harp.* Capable or not capable, I want my money.

### SCENE VI

HARPAGON, ANSELME, ÉLISE, MARIANE, CLÉANTE, VALÈRE, FROSINE, THE COMMISSARY, MAÎTRE JACQUES, LA FLÈCHE

*Clé.* Don't be so troubled, father, and, above all, make no accusations. I have discovered the whereabouts of your casket, and I have come to say that if you will let me marry Mariane your money shall be returned to you.

*Harp.* Where is it?

*Clé.* Don't trouble about that. 'Tis in a place which I will warrant; all depends on me. Tell me your decision; it is for you to choose,—either give me Mariane or lose your casket.

*Harp.* Has nothing been taken out of it?

*Clé.* Nothing whatever. Think this over; make up your mind to accept this marriage, and to join your consent with that of her mother, who leaves her at liberty to choose between us.

*Mar.* [*to* CLÉANTE]. You do not know that this consent is not enough, and that Heaven has given me a brother [*motioning to* VALÈRE], and also a father [*motioning to* ANSELME], from whom you must obtain me.

*Ans.* Heaven, my dear children, did not send me back to you that I should thwart your happiness. Seigneur Harpagon, you can readily believe that the choice of a young girl would fall upon the son rather than on the father. Come, do not make me say that which is not necessary to be heard. Consent, as I do, to this double marriage.

*Harp.* But I must, to give me counsel, see my casket.

*Clé.* You shall see it safe and sound.

*Harp.* I have no money to give in marriage to my children.

*Ans.* I have enough for all; let that not trouble you.

*Harp.* Will you bind yourself to pay the expenses of these marriages?

*Ans.* Yes, I will bind myself. Does that satisfy you?

*Harp.* Yes; if you provide me with a suit of clothes for the wedding.

*Ans.* Agreed. Come, let us enjoy the gladness this happy day has brought.

*Commiss.* Holà! messieurs, holà! Gently, if you please. Who pays me for these writings?

*Harp.* Your writings are no good to us.

*Commiss.* That may be; but I don't intend to have written them for nothing.

*Harp.* [*pointing to* MAÎTRE JACQUES]. Take your payment in that man; I give him to you to hang.

*Maître J.* Alas! what ought one to do in this world? Tell the truth and you'll get a drubbing; tell lies and they'll hang you.

*Ans.* Seigneur Harpagon, you must forgive him this deception.

*Harp.* Then will you pay the Commissary?

*Ans.* So be it. [*To* MARIANE *and* VALÈRE.] Come, let us take our joy and share it with your mother.

*Harp.* And I'll to my dear casket.

## READING LIST

*The Cid*, Corneille
*Andromaque*, Racine
*Phèdre*, Racine
*Iphigénie*, Racine
*Athalie*, Racine
*Esther*, Racine
*Tartuffe*, Molière
*Les Précieuses Ridicules*, Molière
*Le Médecin Malgré Lui*, Molière
*Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*, Molière
*Le Malade Imaginaire*, Molière
*Les Amants Magnifiques* (Court Masque), Molière
*Esther* (from Racine), John Masefield
*Cyrano de Bergerac*, Edmond Rostand
*Molière* (a play), Philip Moeller

## TOPICS

The Pleiade
The Plays of Cyrano de Bergerac
Mondori and the Theâtre du Marais
The Influence of Richelieu on French Drama
The Controversy over *The Cid*
Life of Corneille
Life of Racine
Life of Molière
The Court of Louis XIV
Versailles
The French Classical Rules
The French Theatre of the Seventeenth Century
The Production of a Play in Molière's Time
Costume in Molière's Plays
The Rôles Played by Molière
The Founding of the Comédie Française
Corneille and the Opera
Racine's Treatment of Greek Characters
The Miser in Drama (Euclio in *Aulularia;* Harpagon in *L'Avare;* Volpone in Ben Jonson's *Volpone;* Barabas in Marlowe's *The Jew of Malta;* Shylock in *The Merchant of Venice;* Lovegold in Fielding's *The Miser* [Adapted from *L'Avare*]).

# RESTORATION AND EIGHTEENTH CENTURY DRAMA

The eighteenth century is lacking in great drama, for it was an age of imitations. The French classic rules cramped European tragedy. The writers of comedy corrupted their model, Molière, to satisfy the dissolute society of the time. For the first three quarters of the century, therefore, the plays were artificial and worldly.

## ENGLAND

In England during the years that the theatres were closed under the Commonwealth, between 1642 and 1660, drama did not altogether die out. Plays were occasionally acted, more or less secretly, in Cavalier houses; and some plays were printed. Nevertheless, it was not until the Restoration of Charles II in 1660 that drama revived, —but with a difference. Women were admitted to the profession of actors. The whole moral tone of the theatre deteriorated. The plays themselves catered to the taste of the King and the select circle of fashionable London whose patronage supported the only two theatres in the city. These had been licensed by royal letters patent issued by Charles II upon his coronation. They were: D'Avenant's company, known as the Duke of York's, in Lincoln's Inn Fields; and Killigrew's in the Theatre Royal near Drury Lane. These two companies united at Drury Lane in 1682; and in 1693 a royal patent was granted the actor Betterton for a rival company, which opened at the new playhouse in the tennis court at Lincoln's Inn Fields, but moved later to John Rich's theatre built in 1733 at Covent Garden. Meantime Vanbrugh had built a theatre at the Haymarket in 1705. For the period of the Restoration proper, however, there were only two theatres in London recognized by fashion and the court.

The theatre, like everything else in the reign of this Stuart king, reflected the French court life in which he had spent his exile. The structure of the Restoration theatre, like those in Paris, was a roofed building, artificially lighted. The interior, however, was modeled after the huge opera houses of Italy. The stage was very large and curved out beyond the proscenium arch in what is known as the "apron." This apron stage fostered the conventions of the soliloquy and the aside; for when an actor came down to the foot-lights at the front of the apron in order that his facial expressions might be more clearly seen, he could easily be imagined by the audience to be out of hearing of the characters upstage. Candelabra hung over the projecting apron; the stage behind the proscenium was darker, and hence used for plotters and assassins. Painted scenery had come on to the Italian stage from the elaborate masques and was adopted in the Restoration Theatre. "Wings" painted in false perspective were set up at angles overlapping in perspective, and thus were used to break the huge stage. The scene was continued by a flat canvas backdrop representing panoramas in perspective. The drop curtain was raised and lowered only at the beginning and end of the play.[1] In front of the curtain at each side of the deep and elaborately decorated proscenium arch, were doors used in the play for exit and entrance. Above these doors were the stage boxes; for spectators no longer sat on the stage itself. However, those who sat in these boxes were still practically *on* the stage, and saw much of the action in silhouette. Seats were placed in the pit, and tiers of boxes replaced the galleries. The upper gallery was reserved for the lower classes. An orchestra in front of the stage played between acts.

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[1] *The Siege of Rhodes; a Representation by the art of Prospective in Scenes and the story sung in Recitative Musick* by Sir William D'Avenant, produced at Rutland House in 1656, was the first English play with scenery, although painted scenery seems to have been used to some extent in private theatres before the Civil War. This play (or opera) was revived in 1659 for the opening of the new Duke's Theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields. A description of the scenery, which is typical of Restoration tragedy, will give some idea of the changes that had taken place since Shakespeare's day. This is the Scene before the First Entry: "The curtain being drawn up, a lightsome sky appear'd, discov'ring a maritime coast, full of craggy rocks, and high cliffs, with several verdures naturally growing upon such scituations; and afar off, the true prospect of the City of RHODES, when it was in prosperous estate; with so much view of the gardens and hills about it as the narrowness of the room could allow the scene. In that part of the horizon, terminated by the sea, was represented the *Turkish* fleet, making towards a promontory, some few miles distant from the town." During the course of the play the following changes of scene (and of scenery) were made: The City of Rhodes, "beleaguer'd at Sea and Land"; a Royal Pavilion representing Solyman's imperial throne; Solyman's Camp; the prospect of Mount Philermus, with artificers at work on the castle there, and with a great army drawn up in the plain below; an assault given to the town (with changes back and forth). At the end of the play, "The Curtain is let fall."

This is the theatre that remained the type until the introduction of gas, and then of electricity, pushed the apron farther and farther back, until it was finally eliminated altogether in what is now the modern picture-frame stage. It is interesting to note that the most recent experimenters are reintroducing modifications of both the Elizabethan inner stage and the eighteenth century apron; in fact, in some cases the Greek orchestra circle is being tried out again.

Although the Restoration theatres began with revivals of old favorites like Shakespeare, Ben Jonson, Beaumont and Fletcher, and Ford and Webster, the sophisticated audiences soon found Elizabethan drama too "unrefined," and would go to see Shakespeare only when, in Addison's phrase, it had been "reformed." Jonson, not Shakespeare, was the model. His realistic studies of the shallow ethical standards of contemporary life degenerated in the hands of his successors into cynical comedies that sneered at virtue as hypocritical, and exalted frivolity and even vice as the standard of worldly success. In these plays seriousness was considered ill-bred. Wit and *sang-froid* were the marks of the polished gentleman; and intrigue the main business of the fashionable society which the plots depict. Molière's comedies were imitated, but were debased to suit the indecent and openly immoral taste of London society. Comedy, being less elevated in style than tragedy, was written in prose. The greatest writers of comedy of the time, extending over a period of about thirty years, were: **Etherege, Wycherley, Congreve, Farquhar,** and **Vanbrugh.** In the plays of these men brilliant wit and clever characterization are marred by the vulgarity of the situations and the coarseness of the dialogue. The most interesting plays to read are the two comedies-of-manners: *The Way of the World* by **William Congreve** (1670–1729), and *The Beaux' Stratagem* by **George Farquhar** (1678–1707).

The eighteenth century liking for rhetoric developed a kind of tragedy called the *Heroic Play*. It was really a hybrid of the French classical school of Corneille and Racine, who were the accepted masters, and of post-Shakespearean tragicomedy. The restraints in form of the one were crossed with the exaggerations and theatricality of the latter. Heroic plays are serious dramas, often with a happy ending,—at least the hero and heroine are united after killing off everybody who stands in their way. The characters are kings and queens, emperors and empresses, usually of some far-off oriental country. The heroes, indeed, must be "of an excessive and over-boiling courage,"[1] remarkable alike for their wordy struggles between love and valor, and the bombast of their long speeches, which are mainly declamation, and debate about the pangs of love.

The most illustrious exponent of the heroic play was **John Dryden** (1631–1700). As the supreme critic and literary dictator in contemporary English letters, he defended the classic school, and wrote his plays in accordance with its principles. The unities are observed; no comic relief is allowed in tragedy; the characters are of high rank; and there is more declamation than action. Dryden adopted the riming or heroic couplet as the closest English parallel to the French rimed alexandrine, and thus, in spite of its unreality, made it the medium of English tragedy for many years. However, in his best play, *All for Love* (1678), he returned to the example of Shakespeare and wrote it in blank verse. *The Conquest of Granada* and *Aureng-Zebe* were his most successful heroic plays.

A telling satire on the extravagances of Dryden's heroic drama appeared in 1671 in *The Rehearsal* by **George Villiers,** second Duke of Buckingham, and other poets of the time. In this amusing play Dryden as the poet Bayes (a nickname derived from his recent appointment as poet laureate) is busily engaged in putting into rehearsal a burlesque edition of a heroic tragedy, to his own intense satisfaction, wholly unaware of the ironical mockery of the listeners.

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[1] Dryden's Dedication to *The Conquest of Granada.*

**Joseph Addison** (1672–1719) in his tragedy *Cato* (1713) followed the French school. He used blank verse; but otherwise his play is more strictly regular and classic than any English tragedy of the time. It carries out all of Boileau's rules in regard to tragic composition. The success of *Cato*, due in part to the political meaning read into it at the time, carried on the classic tradition throughout the rest of the century.

Although one other prominent dramatist of the time, **Nicholas Rowe** (1674–1718), professed to write his tragedies "in imitation of Shakespeare's style," he was too much a creature of his own day to break away entirely from the French classical influence. He further satisfied the taste of his contemporaries by giving them the new type of sentimental heroine, and by making "poetic justice" fulfil all moral ends. The most popular of his eight plays were *Tamerlane* and *The Tragedy of Jane Shore*. In 1709 Rowe edited the first critical edition of Shakespeare.

Meantime a change had come over comedy. When in 1698 Jeremy Collier, a Tory clergyman, bitterly denounced the corruption of the stage in his *Short View of the Immorality and Profaneness of the English Stage*, he gained a hearing in spite of the angry defense of the prominent dramatists; and in the course of ten years his denunciation brought results. In the age of Queen Anne a reformation of moral ideals began to make slow headway, and a moral type of comedy, called the *sentimental comedy*, was produced. In this the comic was offset by pathetic situations that reduced the audience to enjoyable tears. One of the characteristics of the sentimental comedy is the readiness of every one in the play to believe the worst without question; no matter how strong the ties of affection or trust, circumstantial evidence against the pure heroine's honor or the noble hero's good faith, is accepted by all as positive proof. A frank question and an honest answer would have straightened out in Act I the complication that produces dire distress for everybody, and wrings the heartstrings of the sympathetic audience until two minutes before the final curtain. However, all is cleared up in the nick of time, the villains meet their just deserts, and everybody lives happily ever after,—always, fortunately, well-off in this world's riches. These plays were thought highly moral, and "there was some edification to be got from these pieces."[1]

It was the emotional Irishman **Richard Steele** (1672–1729) who set the fashion for this sentimental comedy in England with his play *The Conscious Lovers*, produced at Drury Lane Theatre in 1722. In his preface to the printed edition he defends himself from the charge of being unscholarly and inelegant. He says, among other things: "Sure it must be an improvement (of comedy) to introduce a joy too exquisite for laughter. . . . I must contend that the tears that were shed flowed from reason and good sense, and that men ought not to be laughed at for weeping till we come to a more clear notion of what is to be imputed to the hardness of the head and the softness of the heart."

This type, called in English the *sentimental* or *genteel comedy*, is better named in France, where it also flourished, the *tearful comedy* (*comédie larmoyante*). The twentieth century would term it "bunkum" or "hokum." But for long years it held theatre audiences enthralled; and today it crops out continually in the moving pictures.

Satire dealt a death blow to the extravagance and unreality of the heroic plays in two burlesques: **Henry Fielding's** *The Tragedy of Tragedies or The Life and Death of Tom Thumb the Great* (1730); and **Henry Carey's** *Chrononhotonthologos: Being the Most Tragical Tragedy that ever was Tragediz'd by any Company of Tragedians* (1734).

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[1] Sheridan's *The Critic*, Act I, Scene 1, line 186.

Through the greater part of the eighteenth century the new sentimental comedy held the stage in rivalry with the popular Italian opera and pantomime. The dramatic and political satire in *The Beggar's Opera* (1728), a ballad-opera by **John Gay**, as well as the originality of its form, made it the chief theatrical success of the early eighteenth century. A few years later **George Lillo** created in *The London Merchant or The History of George Barnwell* (1731) a domestic tragedy in prose, in which the people, the plot, and the dialogue were drawn from life, not from history or legend. The play was meant to have a good moral effect on the audience. It is a landmark because it proved that drama could be found in the life of ordinary human beings. The third dramatic success of the time was the romantic tragedy *Douglas* (1756) by **John Home**. To the actor **David Garrick** (1717–1779) was due a revival of drama in England. His productions of Shakespeare's plays, though mutilated by eighteenth century "improvements," established again on the English stage the romantic type of drama.

### Goldsmith

It remained, however, for **Oliver Goldsmith** (1728–1774) to restore to comedy the fun and reality of actual life. After an impecunious and roving boyhood and youth, this lovable Irishman wandered to London. There, after many ups and downs, he won the gruff but affectionate friendship of Dr. Johnson. In 1763 he was admitted as one of the charter members of the famous Literary Club. Between periods of drudgery and hack writing Goldsmith produced,—and sold to pay his ever-present debts,—essays, poetry, and fiction. Finding his literary reputation established by the success of *The Vicar of Wakefield* and *The Deserted Village*, he tried his hand at drama. He wrote two plays, one of which was destined to turn the course of English drama into the wholesome channel of naturalness. The first, *The Good Natured Man* (1768), failed because it was considered "low" comedy by the "genteel" taste of the day; but the second, *She Stoops to Conquer* (1772), was an instant success. In spite of the financial prosperity of his later years, Goldsmith died heavily in debt. He lies buried just outside the Temple Church in London.

Goldsmith detested the prevailing sentimental comedy, which he termed a "species of bastard tragedy." He ridiculed its mawkish pathos over scenes of distressed virtue. He insisted that the "art of laughing" must be restored to the comic stage; and in his own two plays he made skillful characterization, lively dialogue, and amusing situations again the basis of true humor. *She Stoops to Conquer* is to this day one of the most diverting farce-comedies on the English stage.

## SHE STOOPS TO CONQUER;

## OR,

## THE MISTAKES OF A NIGHT

Oliver Goldsmith

*Produced at Covent Garden, London, on March 15, 1773*

### *DEDICATION*

*TO SAMUEL JOHNSON, LL. D.*

*Dear Sir,*

*By inscribing this slight performance to you, I do not mean so much to compliment you as myself. It may do me some honour to inform the public, that I have lived many years in intimacy with you. It may serve the interests of mankind also to inform them that the greatest wit may be found in a character, without impairing the most unaffected piety.*

*I have, particularly, reason to thank you for your partiality to this performance. The undertaking a comedy, not merely sentimental, was very dangerous; and Mr. Colman, who saw this piece in its various stages, always thought it so. However, I ventured to trust it to the public; and, though it was necessarily delayed till late in the season, I have every reason to be grateful.*

*I am, dear Sir,*
*Your most sincere friend and admirer,*
*Oliver Goldsmith.*

### DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

MEN

SIR CHARLES MARLOW
YOUNG MARLOW (his son)
HARDCASTLE
HASTINGS
TONY LUMPKIN
DIGGORY

WOMEN

MRS. HARDCASTLE
MISS HARDCASTLE
MISS NEVILLE
MAID

LANDLORD, SERVANTS, etc.

## PROLOGUE

### BY DAVID GARRICK, ESQ.

*Enter* MR. WOODWARD,[1] *dressed in black, and holding a handkerchief to his eyes*

*Prologue.* Excuse me, sirs, I pray—I can't yet speak—
I'm crying now—and have been all the week.
"'Tis not alone this mourning suit," good masters;
"I've that within,"[2] for which there are no plasters!
Pray, would you know the reason why I'm crying?
The Comic Muse, long sick, is now a-dying!
And if she goes, my tears will never stop;
For, as a player, I can't squeeze out one drop:
I am undone, that's all—shall lose my bread—
I'd rather, but that's nothing—lose my head.
When the sweet maid is laid upon the bier,
Shuter[3] and I shall be chief mourners here.
To her a mawkish drab of spurious breed,
Who deals in sentimentals, will succeed!
Poor Ned[4] and I are dead to all intents;
We can as soon speak Greek as sentiments!
Both nervous grown, to keep our spirits up,
We now and then take down a hearty cup.
What shall we do? If Comedy forsake us,
They'll turn us out, and no one else will take us.
But why can't I be moral?—Let me try—
My heart thus pressing—fix'd my face and eye—
With a sententious look, that nothing means
(Faces are blocks in sentimental scenes),
Thus I begin: "All is not gold that glitters,
Pleasures seem sweet, but prove a glass of bitters.
When ign'rance enters, folly is at hand:
Learning is better far than house and land.
Let not your virtue trip; who trips may stumble,
And virtue is not virtue, if she tumble."
I give it up—morals won't do for me;
To make you laugh, I must play tragedy.

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[1] **Mr. Woodward:** a comedian of the time.

[2] **'Tis not alone . . . . within":** See *Hamlet*, Act I, Sc. 2, 1, 77, 85.

[3] **Shuter:** Played the part of *Hardcastle*.

[4] **Ned:** Ned Shuter.

One hope remains—hearing the maid was ill,
A Doctor comes this night to show his skill;
To cheer her heart, and give your muscles motion,
He, in Five Draughts prepar'd, presents a potion:
A kind of magic charm—for, be assur'd,
If you will swallow it, the maid is cur'd:
But desperate the Doctor, and her case is,
If you reject the dose, and make wry faces!
This truth he boasts, will boast it while he lives,
No pois'nous drugs are mix'd in what he gives.
Should he succeed, you'll give him his degree;
If not, within he will receive no fee!
The College *you*, must his pretensions back,
Pronounce him Regular, or dub him Quack.

## ACT I

### Scene I

*A Chamber in an Old-fashioned House*

*Enter* Mrs. Hardcastle *and* Mr. Hardcastle

*Mrs. Hardcastle.* I vow, Mr. Hardcastle, you're very particular. Is there a creature in the whole country but ourselves, that does not take a trip to town now and then, to rub off the rust a little? There's the two Miss Hoggs, and our neighbour Mrs. Grigsby, go to take a month's polishing every winter.

*Hardcastle.* Ay, and bring back vanity and affectation to last them the whole year. I wonder why London cannot keep its own fools at home. In my time, the follies of the town crept slowly among us, but now they travel faster than a stage coach. Its fopperies come down not only as inside passengers, but in the very basket.[1]

*Mrs. Hard.* Ay, your times were fine times indeed; you have been telling us of them for many a long year. Here we live in an old rumbling mansion, that looks for all the world like an inn, but that we never see company. Our best visitors are old Mrs. Oddfish, the curate's wife, and little Cripplegate, the lame dancing master; and all our entertainment your old stories of Prince Eugene[2] and the Duke of Marlborough. I hate such old-fashioned trumpery.

*Hard.* And I love it. I love everything that's old: old friends, old times, old manners, old books, old wine; and, I believe, Dorothy [*taking her hand*], you'll own, I've been pretty fond of an old wife.

*Mrs. Hard.* Lord, Mr. Hardcastle, you're for ever at your Dorothys, and your old wives. You may be a Darby, but I'll be no Joan, I promise you. I'm not so old as you'd make me, by more than one good year. Add twenty to twenty, and make money of that.

*Hard.* Let me see; twenty added to twenty—makes just fifty and seven.

*Mrs. Hard.* It's false, Mr. Hardcastle; I was but twenty when I was brought to bed of Tony, that I had by Mr. Lumpkin, my first husband; and he's not come to years of discretion yet.

*Hard.* Nor ever will, I dare answer for him. Ay, you have taught him finely.

*Mrs. Hard.* No matter. Tony Lumpkin has a good fortune. My son is not to live by his learning. I don't think a boy wants much learning to spend fifteen hundred a year.

*Hard.* Learning, quotha! a mere composition of tricks and mischief.

*Mrs. Hard.* Humour, my dear; nothing but humour. Come, Mr. Hardcastle, you must allow the boy a little humour.

*Hard.* I'd sooner allow him a horse-pond. If burning the footmen's shoes, frightening the maids, and worrying the kittens, be humour, he has it. It was but yesterday he fastened my wig to the back of my chair, and when I went to make a bow, I popt my bald head in Mrs. Frizzle's face.

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[1] **basket:** the two back seats facing one another on the outside of a stagecoach.

[2] **Prince Eugene:** Ally of the Duke of Marlborough at the Battle of Blenheim in 1704.

*Mrs. Hard.* And am I to blame? The poor boy was always too sickly to do any good. A school would be his death. When he comes to be a little stronger, who knows what a year or two's Latin may do for him?

*Hard.* Latin for him! A cat and fiddle. No, no; the alehouse and the stable are the only schools he'll ever go to.

*Mrs. Hard.* Well, we must not snub the poor boy now, for I believe we shan't have him long among us. Anybody that looks in his face may see he's consumptive.

*Hard.* Ay, if growing too fat be one of the symptoms.

*Mrs. Hard.* He coughs sometimes.

*Hard.* Yes, when his liquor goes the wrong way.

*Mrs. Hard.* I'm actually afraid of his lungs.

*Hard.* And truly, so am I; for he sometimes whoops like a speaking trumpet—[TONY *hallooing behind the scenes.*]—Oh, there he goes—a very consumptive figure, truly!

*Enter* TONY, *crossing the stage*

*Mrs. Hard.* Tony, where are you going, my charmer? Won't you give papa and I a little of your company, lovee?

*Tony.* I'm in haste, mother; I cannot stay.

*Mrs. Hard.* You shan't venture out this raw evening, my dear; you look most shockingly.

*Tony.* I can't stay, I tell you. The Three Pigeons expects me down every moment. There's some fun going forward.

*Hard.* Ay; the alehouse, the old place; I thought so.

*Mrs. Hard.* A low, paltry set of fellows.

*Tony.* Not so low, neither. There's Dick Muggins, the exciseman; Jack Slang, the horse-doctor; little Aminadab, that grinds the music-box; and Tom Twist, that spins the pewter platter.

*Mrs. Hard.* Pray, my dear, disappoint them for one night, at least.

*Tony.* As for disappointing them, I should not so much mind; but I can't abide to disappoint myself.

*Mrs. Hard.* [*detaining him*]. You shan't go.

*Tony.* I will, I tell you.

*Mrs. Hard.* I say you shan't.

*Tony.* We'll see which is strongest, you or I. [*Exit, hauling her out*

*Hard.* [*alone*]. Ay, there goes a pair that only spoil each other. But is not the whole age in combination to drive sense and discretion out of doors? There's my pretty darling, Kate! the fashions of the times have almost infected her too. By living a year or two in town, she is as fond of gauze and French frippery as the best of them.

*Enter* MISS HARDCASTLE

*Hard.* Blessings on my pretty innocence! drest out as usual, my Kate. Goodness! What a quantity of superfluous silk hast thou got about thee, girl! I could never teach the fools of this age, that the indigent world could be clothed out of the trimmings of the vain.

*Miss Hardcastle.* You know our agreement, sir. You allow me the morning to receive and pay visits, and to dress in my own manner; and in the evening, I put on my housewife's dress, to please you.

*Hard.* Well, remember, I insist on the terms of our agreement; and, by the bye, I believe I shall have occasion to try your obedience this very evening.

*Miss Hard.* I protest, sir, I don't comprehend your meaning.

*Hard.* Then, to be plain with you, Kate, I expect the young gentleman I have chosen to be your husband from town this very day. I have his father's letter, in which he informs me his son is set out, and that he intends to follow himself shortly after.

*Miss Hard.* Indeed! I wish I had known something of this before. Bless me, how shall I behave? It's a thousand to one I shan't like him; our meeting will be so formal, and so like a thing of business, that I shall find no room for friendship or esteem.

*Hard.* Depend upon it, child, I'll never control your choice; but Mr. Marlow, whom I have pitched upon, is the son of my old friend, Sir Charles Marlow, of whom you have heard me talk so often. The young gentleman has been bred a scholar, and is designed for an employment in the service of his country. I am told he's a man of an excellent understanding.

*Miss Hard.* Is he?

*Hard.* Very generous.

*Miss Hard.* I believe I shall like him.

*Hard.* Young and brave.

*Miss Hard.* I'm sure I shall like him.

*Hard.* And very handsome.

*Miss Hard.* My dear papa, say no more [*kissing his hand*], he's mine—I'll have him.

*Hard.* And, to crown all, Kate, he's one of the most bashful and reserved young fellows in all the world.

*Miss Hard.* Eh! You have frozen me to death again. That word *reserved* has undone all the rest of his accomplishments. A reserved lover, it is said, always makes a suspicious husband.

*Hard.* On the contrary, modesty seldom resides in a breast that is not enriched with nobler virtues. It was the very feature in his character that first struck me.

*Miss Hard.* He must have more striking features to catch me, I promise you. However, if he be so young, so handsome, and so everything, as you mention, I believe he'll do still. I think I'll have him.

*Hard.* Ay, Kate, but there is still an obstacle. It's more than an even wager he may not have you.

*Miss Hard.* My dear papa, why will you mortify one so?—Well, if he refuses, instead of breaking my heart at his indifference, I'll only break my glass for its flattery, set my cap to some newer fashion, and look out for some less difficult admirer.

*Hard.* Bravely resolved! In the mean time, I'll go prepare the servants for his reception: as we seldom see company, they want as much training as a company of recruits the first day's muster. [*Exit*

*Miss Hard.* [*alone*]. Lud, this news of papa's puts me all in a flutter. Young, handsome; these he put last; but I put them foremost. Sensible, good-natured; I like all that. But then, reserved and sheepish; that's much against him. Yet, can't he be cured of his timidity by being taught to be proud of his wife? Yes, and can't I—But I vow I'm disposing of the husband before I have secured the lover.

*Enter* MISS NEVILLE

*Miss Hard.* I'm glad you're come, Neville, my dear. Tell me, Constance, how do I look this evening? Is there anything whimsical[1] about me? Is it one of my well-looking days, child? Am I in face to-day?

*Miss Neville.* Perfectly, my dear. Yet now I look again—bless me!—surely no accident has happened among the canary birds or the gold fishes? Has your brother or the cat been meddling? Or has the last novel been too moving?

*Miss Hard.* No; nothing of all this. I have been threatened—I can scarce get it out—I have been threatened with a lover.

*Miss Nev.* And his name—

*Miss Hard.* Is Marlow.

*Miss Nev.* Indeed!

*Miss Hard.* The son of Sir Charles Marlow.

*Miss Nev.* As I live, the most intimate friend of Mr. Hastings, my admirer. They are never asunder. I believe you must have seen him when we lived in town.

*Miss Hard.* Never.

*Miss Nev.* He's a very singular character, I assure you. Among women of reputation and virtue, he is the modestest man alive; but his acquaintance gives him a very different character among creatures of another stamp: you understand me.

*Miss Hard.* An odd character, indeed. I shall never be able to manage him. What shall I do? Pshaw, think no more of him, but trust to occurrences for success. But how goes on your own affair, my dear? Has my mother been courting you for my brother Tony, as usual?

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[1] whimsical: freakish.

*Miss Nev.* I have just come from one of our agreeable *tête-à-têtes.* She has been saying a hundred tender things, and setting off her pretty monster as the very pink of perfection.

*Miss Hard.* And her partiality is such, that she actually thinks him sō. A fortune like yours is no small temptation. Besides, as she has the sole management of it, I'm not surprised to see her unwilling to let it go out of the family.

*Miss Nev.* A fortune like mine, which chiefly consists in jewels, is no such mighty temptation. But, at any rate, if my dear Hastings be but constant, I make no doubt to be too hard for her at last. However, I let her suppose that I am in love with her son; and she never once dreams that my affections are fixed upon another.

*Miss Hard.* My good brother holds out stoutly. I could almost love him for hating you so.

*Miss Nev.* It is a good-natured creature at bottom, and I'm sure would wish to see me married to anybody but himself. But my aunt's bell rings for our afternoon's walk round the improvements. *Allons!* Courage is necessary, as our affairs are critical.

*Miss Hard.* Would it were bed-time, and all were well. [*Exeunt*

## Scene II

*An Alehouse Room*

*Several shabby fellows with punch and tobacco.* Tony, *at the head of the table, a little higher than the rest, a mallet in his hand.*

*Omnes.* Hurrea! hurrea! hurrea! bravo!

*1st Fellow.* Now, gentlemen, silence for a song. The 'Squire is going to knock himself down for a song.

*Omnes.* Ay, a song, a song!

*Tony.* Then I'll sing you, gentlemen, a song I made upon this alehouse, The Three Pigeons.

SONG

Let schoolmasters puzzle their brain
With grammar, and nonsense, and learning;
Good liquor, I stoutly maintain,
Gives *genus*[1] a better discerning.
Let them brag of their heathenish gods,
Their Lethes, their Styxes, and Stygians,
Their *Quis*, and their *Quæs*, and their *Quods*,
They're all but a parcel of Pigeons.
Toroddle, toroddle, toroll.

When methodist preachers come down,
A-preaching that drinking is sinful,
I'll wager the rascals a crown,
They always preach best with a skinful.
But when you come down with your pence,
For a slice of their scurvy religion,
I'll leave it to all men of sense,
But you, my good friend, are the Pigeon.[2]
Toroddle, toroddle, toroll.

Then come, put the jorum[3] about,
And let us be merry and clever,
Our hearts and our liquors are stout,
Here's the Three Jolly Pigeons for ever.
Let some cry up woodcock or hare,
Your bustards, your ducks, and your widgeons;
But of all the birds in the air,
Here's a health to the Three Jolly Pigeons.
Toroddle, toroddle, toroll.

*Omnes.* Bravo, bravo!

*1st Fell.* The 'Squire has got some spunk in him.

*2nd Fell.* I loves to hear him sing, bekeays he never gives us nothing that's low.

*3rd Fell.* O! damn anything that's low, I cannot bear it.

*4th Fell.* The genteel thing is the genteel thing any time: if so be that a gentleman bees in a concatenation[4] accordingly.

*3rd Fell.* I like the maxum of it, Master Muggins. What, though I am obligated to dance a bear, a man may be a gentleman for all that. May this be my poison, if my bear ever dances but to the very genteelest of tunes; "Water Parted,"[1] or "The minuet in Ariadne."[2]

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[1] genus: He means *genius*.

[2] Pigeon: *here, slang:*—dupe.

[3] jorum: a large drinking vessel.

[4] concatenation: He is showing off his vocabulary! He means "in accord with it."

*2nd Fell.* What a pity it is the 'Squire is not come to his own. It would be well for all the publicans[3] within ten miles round of him.

*Tony.* Ecod,[4] and so it would, Master Slang. I'd then show what it was to keep choice of company.

*2nd Fell.* O, he takes after his own father for that. To be sure, old 'Squire Lumpkin was the finest gentleman I ever set my eyes on. For winding the straight horn, or beating a thicket for a hare, or a wench, he never had his fellow. It was a saying in the place, that he kept the best horses, dogs, and girls, in the whole county.

*Tony.* Ecod, and when I'm of age I'll be no bastard, I promise you. I have been thinking of Bet Bouncer and the miller's gray mare to begin with. But come, my boys, drink about and be merry, for you pay no reckoning. Well, Stingo, what's the matter?

*Enter* LANDLORD

*Landlord.* There be two gentlemen in a post-chaise at the door. They have lost their way upo' the forest; and they are talking something about Mr. Hardcastle.

*Tony.* As sure as can be, one of them must be the gentleman that's coming down to court my sister. Do they seem to be Londoners?

*Land.* I believe they may. They look woundily[5] like Frenchmen.

*Tony.* Then desire them to step this way, and I'll set them right in a twinkling. [*Exit* LANDLORD.] Gentlemen, as they mayn't be good enough company for you, step down for a moment, and I'll be with you in the squeezing of a lemon. [*Exeunt* MOB

*Tony* [*alone*]. Father-in-law[6] has been calling me whelp and hound this half year. Now, if I pleased, I could be so revenged upon the old grumbletonian.[7] But then I'm afraid,—afraid of what? I shall soon be worth fifteen hundred a year, and let him frighten me out of *that* if he can.

*Enter* LANDLORD, *conducting* MARLOW *and* HASTINGS

*Marlow.* What a tedious, uncomfortable day have we had of it! We were told it was but forty miles across the country, and we have come above threescore!

*Hastings.* And all, Marlow, from that unaccountable reserve of yours, that would not let us inquire more frequently on the way.

*Marl.* I own, Hastings, I am unwilling to lay myself under an obligation to every one I meet; and often stand the chance of an unmannerly answer.

*Hast.* At present, however, we are not likely to receive any answer.

*Tony.* No offence, gentlemen. But I'm told you have been inquiring for one Mr. Hardcastle, in these parts. Do you know what part of the country you are in?

*Hast.* Not in the least, sir, but should thank you for information.

*Tony.* Nor the way you came?

*Hast.* No, sir; but if you can inform us—

*Tony.* Why, gentlemen, if you know neither the road you are going, nor where you are, nor the road you came, the first thing I have to inform you is, that—you have lost your way.

*Marl.* We wanted no ghost to tell us that.[8]

*Tony.* Pray, gentlemen, may I be so bold as to ask the place from whence you came?

*Marl.* That's not necessary towards directing us where we are to go.

*Tony.* No offence; but question for question is all fair, you know. Pray, gentlemen, is not this same Hardcastle a cross-grained, old-fashioned, whimsical fellow, with an ugly face: a daughter, and a pretty son?

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[1] **"Water Parted"**: From the opera, *Artaxerxes*, by Arne.

[2] **"The . . . Ariadne"**: From Handel's opera of *Ariadne*.

[3] **publicans**: innkeepers.

[4] **Ecod**: rustic for *egad*.

[5] **woundily**: mightily.

[6] **father-in-law**: He means his stepfather.

[7] **grumbletonian**: not of Tony's invention; but a nickname applied to members of a political party in the 17th century, who were opposed to William III.

[8] **We . . . that**: See *Hamlet*, Act I, Sc. 5, l. 125–126.

*Hast.* We have not seen the gentleman; but he has the family you mention.

*Tony.* The daughter, a tall, trapesing, trolloping, talkative maypole; the son, a pretty, well-bred, agreeable youth, that every body is fond of!

*Marl.* Our information differs in this. The daughter is said to be well-bred, and beautiful; the son, an awkward booby, reared up and spoiled at his mother's apron-string.

*Tony.* He-he-hem!—Then, gentlemen, all I have to tell you is, that you won't reach Mr. Hardcastle's house this night, I believe.

*Hast.* Unfortunate!

*Tony.* It's a damn'd long, dark, boggy, dirty, dangerous way. Stingo, tell the gentlemen the way to Mr. Hardcastle's;—[*winking upon the* LANDLORD], Mr. Hardcastle's of Quagmire Marsh, you understand me?

*Land.* Master Hardcastle's! Lack-a-daisy, my masters, you're come a deadly deal wrong. When you came to the bottom of the hill, you should have crossed down Squash Lane.

*Marl.* Cross down Squash Lane!

*Land.* Then you were to keep straight forward, till you came to four roads.

*Marl.* Come to where four roads meet?

*Tony.* Ay; but you must be sure to take only one of them.

*Marl.* O, sir, you're facetious.

*Tony.* Then, keeping to the right, you are to go sideways till you come upon Crack-skull Common; there you must look sharp for the track of the wheel, and go forward till you come to Farmer Murrain's barn. Coming to the farmer's barn, you are to turn to the right, and then to the left, and then to the right about again, till you find out the old mill—

*Marl.* Zounds, man! we could as soon find out the longitude.[1]

*Hast.* What's to be done, Marlow?

*Marl.* This house promises but a poor reception; though, perhaps, the landlord can accommodate us.

*Land.* Alack, master, we have but one spare bed in the whole house.

*Tony.* And to my knowledge, that's taken up by three lodgers already. [*After a pause in which the rest seem disconcerted.*] I have hit it. Don't you think, Stingo, our landlady could accommodate the gentlemen by the fire-side, with—three chairs and a bolster?

*Hast.* I hate sleeping by the fire-side.

*Marl.* And I detest your three chairs and a bolster.

*Tony.* You do, do you?—then, let me see—what if you go on a mile further, to the Buck's Head; the old Buck's Head on the hill, one of the best inns in the whole country?

*Hast.* O ho! so we have escaped an adventure for this night, however.

*Land.* [*apart to* TONY]. Sure, you ben't sending them to your father's as an inn, be you?

*Tony.* Mum, you fool, you. Let *them* find that out. [*To them.*] You have only to keep on straight forward, till you come to a large old house by the road side. You'll see a pair of large horns over the door. That's the sign. Drive up the yard, and call stoutly about you.

*Hast.* Sir, we are obliged to you. The servants can't miss the way?

*Tony.* No, no; but I tell you, though, the landlord is rich, and going to leave off business; so he wants to be thought a gentleman, saving your presence,—he! he! he! He'll be for giving you his company; and, ecod, if you mind him, he'll persuade you that his mother was an alderman, and his aunt a justice of peace.

*Land.* A troublesome old blade, to be sure; but a[2] keeps as good wines and beds as any in the whole country.

*Marl.* Well, if he supplies us with these, we shall want no further connexion. We are to turn to the right, did you say?

*Tony.* No, no, straight forward. I'll just step myself, and show you a piece of the way. [*To the* LANDLORD.] Mum!

*Land.* Ah, bless your heart, for a sweet, pleasant, mischievous son.

[*Exeunt*

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[1] **find out the longitude**: After years of experimentation one John Harrison perfected a chronometer to determine longitude at sea, and so won in 1767 the award of £20,000 which had been offered by act of Parliament in 1713. The full sum, however, was not paid him until 1773.

[2] **a**: he.

## ACT II

### Scene I

*An Old-fashioned House*

*Enter* Hardcastle, *followed by three or four awkward* Servants

*Hard.* Well, I hope you are perfect in the table exercise I have been teaching you these three days. You all know your posts and your places, and can show that you have been used to good company, without ever stirring from home.

*Omnes.* Ay, ay.

*Hard.* When company comes, you are not to pop out and stare, and then run in again, like frighted rabbits in a warren.

*Omnes.* No, no.

*Hard.* You, Diggory, whom I have taken from the barn, are to make a show at the side table; and you, Roger, whom I have advanced from the plough, are to place yourself behind my chair. But you're not to stand so, with your hands in your pockets. Take your hands from your pockets, Roger; and from your head, you blockhead, you. See how Diggory carries his hands. They're a little too stiff, indeed, but that's no great matter.

*Diggory.* Ay, mind how I hold them. I learned to hold my hands this way, when I was upon drill for the militia. And so being upon drill—

*Hard.* You must not be so talkative, Diggory. You must be all attention to the guests. You must hear us talk, and not think of talking; you must see us drink, and not think of drinking; you must see us eat, and not think of eating.

*Dig.* By the laws, your worship, that's perfectly unpossible. Whenever Diggory sees yeating going forward, ecod, he's always wishing for a mouthful himself.

*Hard.* Blockhead! Is not a belly-full in the kitchen as good as a belly-full in the parlour? Stay your stomach with that reflection.

*Dig.* Ecod, I thank your worship, I'll make a shift to stay my stomach with a slice of cold beef in the pantry.

*Hard.* Diggory, you are too talkative. Then, if I happen to say a good thing, or tell a good story at table, you must not all burst out a-laughing, as if you made part of the company.

*Dig.* Then, ecod, your worship must not tell the story of the Ould Grouse in the gun-room: I can't help laughing at that—he! he! he!—for the soul of me! We have laughed at that these twenty years—ha! ha! ha!

*Hard.* Ha! ha! ha! The story is a good one. Well, honest Diggory, you may laugh at that—but still remember to be attentive. Suppose one of the company should call for a glass of wine, how will you behave? A glass of wine, sir, if you please, [*to* Diggory.]—Eh, why don't you move?

*Dig.* Ecod, your worship, I never have courage till I see the eatables and drinkables brought upo' the table, and then I'm as bauld as a lion.

*Hard.* What, will nobody move?

*1st Serv.* I'm not to leave this pleace.

*2nd Serv.* I'm sure it's no pleace of mine.

*3rd Serv.* Nor mine, for sartain.

*Dig.* Wauns,[1] and I'm sure it canna be mine.

*Hard.* You numskulls! and so, while, like your betters, you are quarrelling for places, the guests must be starved. O you dunces! I find I must begin all over again—But don't I hear a coach drive into the yard? To your posts, you blockheads! I'll go in the meantime and give my old friend's son a hearty reception at the gate. [*Exit* Hardcastle

*Dig.* By the elevens, my pleace is quite gone out of my head.

*Roger.* I know that my pleace is to be every where.

*1st Serv.* Where the devil is mine?

*2nd Serv.* My pleace is to be no where at all; and so Ize go about my business.

[*Exeunt* Servants, *running about as if frightened, several ways*

*Enter* Servant, *with candles, showing in* Marlow *and* Hastings

*Serv.* Welcome, gentlemen, very welcome! This way.

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[1] **Wauns**: rustic for the Londoner's "*Zounds!*"

*Hast.* After the disappointments of the day, welcome once more, Charles, to the comforts of a clean room and a good fire. Upon my word, a very well-looking house; antique but creditable.

*Marl.* The usual fate of a large mansion. Having first ruined the master by good house-keeping, it at last comes to levy contributions as an inn.

*Hast.* As you say, we passengers are to be taxed to pay all these fineries. I have often seen a good side-board, or a marble chimney-piece, though not actually put in the bill, inflame a reckoning confoundedly.

*Marl.* Travellers, George, must pay in all places; the only difference is, that in good inns you pay dearly for luxuries; in bad inns you are fleeced and starved.

*Hast.* You have lived pretty much among them. In truth, I have been often surprised, that you who have seen so much of the world, with your natural good sense, and your many opportunities, could never yet acquire a requisite share of assurance.

*Marl.* The Englishman's malady. But tell me, George, where could I have learned that assurance you talk of? My life has been chiefly spent in a college, or an inn, in seclusion from that lovely part of the creation that chiefly teach men confidence. I don't know that I was ever familiarly acquainted with a single modest woman—except my mother—But among females of another class, you know—

*Hast.* Ay, among them you are impudent enough, of all conscience!

*Marl.* They are of *us*, you know.

*Hast.* But in the company of women of reputation I never saw such an idiot, such a trembler; you look for all the world as if you wanted an opportunity of stealing out of the room.

*Marl.* Why, man, that's because I do want to steal out of the room. Faith, I have often formed a resolution to break the ice, and rattle away at any rate. But I don't know how, a single glance from a pair of fine eyes has totally overset my resolution. An impudent fellow may counterfeit modesty, but I'll be hanged if a modest man can ever counterfeit impudence.

*Hast.* If you could but say half the fine things to them that I have heard you lavish upon the barmaid of an inn, or even a college bed-maker—

*Marl.* Why, George, I can't say fine things to them; they freeze, they petrify me. They may talk of a comet, or a burning mountain, or some such bagatelle; but to me a modest woman, drest out in all her finery, is the most tremendous object of the whole creation.

*Hast.* Ha! ha! ha! At this rate, man, how can you ever expect to marry?

*Marl.* Never; unless, as among kings and princes, my bride were to be courted by proxy. If, indeed, like an Eastern bridegroom, one were to be introduced to a wife he never saw before, it might be endured. But to go through all the terrors of a formal courtship, together with the episode of aunts, grandmothers, and cousins, and at last to blurt out the broad staring question of, "Madam, will you marry me?" No, no, that's a strain much above me, I assure you.

*Hast.* I pity you. But how do you intend behaving to the lady you are come down to visit at the request of your father?

*Marl.* As I behave to all other ladies. Bow very low, answer yes or no to all her demands—But for the rest, I don't think I shall venture to look in her face till I see my father's again.

*Hast.* I'm surprised that one who is so warm a friend can be so cool a lover.

*Marl.* To be explicit, my dear Hastings, my chief inducement down was to be instrumental in forwarding your happiness, not my own. Miss Neville loves you, the family don't know you; as my friend you are sure of a reception, and let honour do the rest.

*Hast.* My dear Marlow! But I'll suppress the emotion. Were I a wretch, meanly seeking to carry off a fortune, you should be the last man in the world I would apply to for assistance. But Miss Neville's person is all I ask, and that is mine, both from her deceased father's consent, and her own inclination.

*Marl.* Happy man! You have talents and art to captivate any woman. I'm doomed to adore the sex, and yet to converse with the only part of it I despise. This stammer in my address, and this awkward, prepossessing visage of mine can never permit me to soar above the reach of a milliner's 'prentice, or one of the duchesses[1] of Drury Lane. Pshaw! this fellow here to interrupt us.

*Enter* HARDCASTLE

*Hard.* Gentlemen, once more you are heartily welcome. Which is Mr. Marlow? Sir, you are heartily welcome. It's not my way, you see, to receive my friends with my back to the fire. I like to give them a hearty reception in the old style at my gate. I like to see their horses and trunks taken care of.

*Marl.* [*aside*]. He has got our names from the servants already. [*To him.*] We approve your caution and hospitality, sir. [*To* HASTINGS.] I have been thinking, George, of changing our travelling dresses in the morning. I am grown confoundedly ashamed of mine.

*Hard.* I beg, Mr. Marlow, you'll use no ceremony in this house.

*Hast.* I fancy, George, you're right; the first blow is half the battle. I intend opening the campaign with the white and gold.[2]

*Hard.* Mr. Marlow—Mr. Hastings—gentlemen—pray be under no restraint in this house. This is Liberty-hall, gentlemen. You may do just as you please here.

*Marl.* Yet, George, if we open the campaign too fiercely at first, we may want ammunition before it is over. I think to reserve the embroidery to secure a retreat.

*Hard.* Your talking of a retreat, Mr. Marlow, puts me in mind of the Duke of Marlborough, when we went to besiege Denain.[3] He first summoned the garrison—

*Marl.* Don't you think the *ventre d'or* waistcoat will do with the plain brown?

*Hard.* He first summoned the garrison, which might consist of about five thousand men—

*Hast.* I think not: brown and yellow mix but very poorly.

*Hard.* I say, gentlemen, as I was telling you, he summoned the garrison, which might consist of about five thousand men—

*Marl.* The girls like finery.

*Hard.* Which might consist of about five thousand men, well appointed with stores, ammunition, and other implements of war. "Now," says the Duke of Marlborough to George Brooks, that stood next to him—you must have heard of George Brooks—"I'll pawn my dukedom," says he, "but I take that garrison without spilling a drop of blood." So—

*Marl.* What, my good friend, if you gave us a glass of punch in the meantime; it would help us to carry on the siege with vigour.

*Hard.* Punch, sir! [*Aside.*] This is the most unaccountable kind of modesty I ever met with.

*Marl.* Yes, sir, punch! A glass of warm punch, after our journey, will be comfortable. This is Liberty-hall, you know.

*Hard.* Here's a cup, sir.

*Marl.* [*aside*]. So this fellow, in his Liberty-hall, will only let us have just what he pleases.

*Hard.* [*taking the cup*]. I hope you'll find it to your mind. I have prepared it with my own hands, and I believe you'll own the ingredients are tolerable. Will you be so good as to pledge me, sir? Here, Mr. Marlow, here is to our better acquaintance!

*Drinks.*

*Marl.* [*aside*]. A very impudent fellow this. But he's a character, and I'll humour him a little. Sir, my service to you.

*Drinks.*

*Hast.* [*aside*]. I see this fellow wants to give us his company, and forgets that he's an innkeeper, before he has learned to be a gentleman.

*Marl.* From the excellence of your cup, my old friend, I suppose you have a good deal of business in this part of the country. Warm work, now and then, at elections, I suppose?

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[1] **one . . . duchesses:** women who palmed themselves off as belonging to the nobility.

[2] **white and gold:** *suit* understood.

[3] **when . . . Denain:** In 1712 the English were defeated here.

*Hard.* No, sir, I have long given that work over. Since our betters have hit upon the expedient of electing each other, there is no business "for us that sell ale."[1]

*Hast.* So, then, you have no turn for politics, I find.

*Hard.* Not in the least. There was a time, indeed, I fretted myself about the mistakes of government, like other people; but, finding myself every day grow more angry, and the government growing no better, I left it to mend itself. Since that, I no more trouble my head about Hyder Ally,[2] or Ally Cawn,[3] than about Ally Croaker.[4] Sir, my service to you.

*Hast.* So that, with eating above stairs, and drinking below, with receiving your friends within, and amusing them without, you lead a good, pleasant, bustling life of it.

*Hard.* I do stir about a great deal, that's certain. Half the differences of the parish are adjusted in this very parlour.

*Marl.* [*after drinking*]. And you have an argument in your cup, old gentleman, better than any in Westminster-hall.[5]

*Hard.* Ay, young gentleman, that, and a little philosophy.

*Marl.* [*aside*]. Well, this is the first time I ever heard of an innkeeper's philosophy.

*Hast.* So then, like an experienced general, you attack them on every quarter. If you find their reason manageable, you attack it with your philosophy; if you find they have no reason, you attack them with this. Here's your health, my philosopher. *Drinks.*

*Hard.* Good, very good, thank you; ha! ha! Your generalship puts me in mind of Prince Eugene, when he fought the Turks at the battle of Belgrade.[6] You shall hear.

*Marl.* Instead of the battle of Belgrade, I believe it's almost time to talk about supper. What has your philosophy got in the house for supper?

*Hard.* For supper, sir!—[*Aside*]. Was ever such a request to a man in his own house!

*Marl.* Yes, sir, supper, sir; I begin to feel an appetite. I shall make devilish work to-night in the larder, I promise you.

*Hard.* [*aside*]. Such a brazen dog, sure, never my eyes beheld. [*To him.*] Why, really, sir, as for supper I can't well tell. My Dorothy and the cook-maid settle these things between them. I leave these kind of things entirely to them.

*Marl.* You do, do you?

*Hard.* Entirely. By the bye, I believe they are in actual consultation upon what's for supper this moment in the kitchen.

*Marl.* Then I beg they'll admit me as one of their privy-council. It's a way I have got. When I travel I always choose to regulate my own supper. Let the cook be called. No offence, I hope, sir.

*Hard.* O, no, sir, none in the least; yet I don't know how: our Bridget, the cook-maid, is not very communicative upon these occasions. Should we send for her, she might scold us all out of the house.

*Hast.* Let's see your list of the larder, then. I ask it as a favour. I always match my appetite to my bill of fare.

*Marl.* [*to* HARDCASTLE, *who looks at them with surprise*]. Sir, he's very right, and it's my way, too.

*Hard.* Sir, you have a right to command here. Here, Roger, bring us the bill of fare for to-night's supper: I believe it's drawn out. [*Exit* ROGER.] Your manner, Mr. Hastings, puts me in mind of my uncle, Colonel Wallop. It was a saying of his, that no man was sure of his supper till he had eaten it.

*Hast.* [*aside*]. All upon the high ropes! His uncle a colonel! We shall soon hear of his mother being a justice of the peace. [*Re-enter* ROGER.] But let's hear the bill of fare.

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[1] **for us . . . ale":** probably an allusion to one method of securing votes.

[2] **Hyder Ally:** sultan of Mysore, India.

[3] **Ally Cawn:** native Governor of Bengal.

[4] **Ally Croaker:** a popular Irish song.

[5] **Westminster-hall:** where law courts were held.

[6] **battle of Belgrade:** in 1717.

*Marl.* [*perusing*]. What's here? For the first course; for the second course; for the dessert. The devil, sir, do you think we have brought down the whole Joiners' Company, or the Corporation of Bedford, to eat up such a supper? Two or three little things, clean and comfortable, will do.

*Hast.* But let's hear it.

*Marl.* [*reading*]. For the first course, at the top, a pig, and pruin[1] sauce.

*Hast.* Damn your pig, I say!

*Marl.* And damn your pruin sauce, say I!

*Hard.* And yet, gentlemen, to men that are hungry, pig with pruin sauce is very good eating.

*Marl.* At the bottom, a calf's tongue and brains.

*Hast.* Let your brains be knocked out, my good sir, I don't like them.

*Marl.* Or you may clap them on a plate by themselves. I do.

*Hard.* [*aside*]. Their impudence confounds me. [*To them.*] Gentlemen, you are my guests, make what alterations you please. Is there anything else you wish to retrench or alter, gentlemen?

*Marl.* Item: A pork pie, a boiled rabbit and sausages, a Florentine,[2] a shaking pudding, and a dish of tiff—taff—taffety cream!

*Hast.* Confound your made dishes! I shall be as much at a loss in this house as at a green and yellow dinner at the French ambassador's table. I'm for plain eating.

*Hard.* I'm sorry, gentlemen, that I have nothing you like, but if there be any thing you have a particular fancy to—

*Marl.* Why, really, sir, your bill of fare is so exquisite, that any one part of it is full as good as another. Send us what you please. So much for supper. And now to see that our beds are aired, and properly taken care of.

*Hard.* I entreat you'll leave all that to me. You shall not stir a step.

*Marl.* Leave that to you! I protest, sir, you must excuse me, I always look to these things myself.

*Hard.* I must insist, sir, you'll make yourself easy on that head.

*Marl.* You see I'm resolved on it.—[*Aside.*] A very troublesome fellow this, as ever I met with.

*Hard.* Well, sir, I'm resolved at least to attend you. [*Aside.*] This may be modern modesty, but I never saw any thing look so like old-fashioned impudence.

[*Exeunt* MARLOW *and* HARDCASTLE

*Hast.* [*alone*]. So I find this fellow's civilities begin to grow troublesome. But who can be angry at those assiduities which are meant to please him? Ha! what do I see? Miss Neville, by all that's happy!

*Enter* MISS NEVILLE

*Miss Nev.* My dear Hastings! To what unexpected good fortune, to what accident, am I to ascribe this happy meeting?

*Hast.* Rather let me ask the same question, as I could never have hoped to meet my dearest Constance at an inn.

*Miss Nev.* An inn! sure you mistake: my aunt, my guardian, lives here. What could induce you to think this house an inn?

*Hast.* My friend, Mr. Marlow, with whom I came down, and I, have been sent here as to an inn, I assure you. A young fellow, whom we accidentally met at a house hard by, directed us hither.

*Miss Nev.* Certainly it must be one of my hopeful cousin's tricks, of whom you have heard me talk so often; ha! ha! ha!

*Hast.* He whom your aunt intends for you? he of whom I have such just apprehensions?

*Miss Nev.* You have nothing to fear from him, I assure you. You'd adore him if you knew how heartily he despises me. My aunt knows it too, and has undertaken to court me for him, and actually begins to think she has made a conquest.

*Hast.* Thou dear dissembler! You must know, my Constance, I have just seized this happy opportunity of my friend's visit here to get admittance into the family. The horses that carried us down are now fatigued with their journey, but they'll soon be refreshed; and, then, if my dearest girl will trust in her faithful Hastings, we shall soon be landed in France, where even among the slaves the laws of marriage are respected.[1]

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[1] pruin: prune.

[2] Florentine: a meat pie.

*Miss Nev.* I have often told you, that though ready to obey you, I yet should leave my little fortune behind with reluctance. The greatest part of it was left me by my uncle, the India director, and chiefly consists in jewels. I have been for some time persuading my aunt to let me wear them. I fancy I'm very near succeeding. The instant they are put into my possession, you shall find me ready to make them and myself yours.

*Hast.* Perish the baubles! Your person is all I desire. In the meantime, my friend Marlow must not be let into his mistake. I know the strange reserve of his temper is such, that if abruptly informed of it, he would instantly quit the house before our plan was ripe for execution.

*Miss Nev.* But how shall we keep him in the deception? Miss Hardcastle is just returned from walking; what if we still continue to deceive him?—This, this way—

*They confer.*

*Enter* MARLOW

*Marl.* The assiduities of these good people tease me beyond bearing. My host seems to think it ill manners to leave me alone, and so he claps not only himself but his old-fashioned wife on my back. They talk of coming to sup with us, too; and then, I suppose, we are to run the gauntlet through all the rest of the family.—What have we got here?

*Hast.* My dear Charles! Let me congratulate you!—The most fortunate accident!—Who do you think is just alighted?

*Marl.* Cannot guess.

*Hast.* Our mistresses, boy, Miss Hardcastle and Miss Neville. Give me leave to introduce Miss Constance Neville to your acquaintance. Happening to dine in the neighborhood, they called on their return to take fresh horses here. Miss Hardcastle has just stept into the next room, and will be back in an instant. Wasn't it lucky? eh!

*Marl.* [*aside*]. I have just been mortified enough of all conscience, and here comes something to complete my embarrassment.

*Hast.* Well, but wasn't it the most fortunate thing in the world?

*Marl.* Oh, yes! Very fortunate—a most joyful encounter—But our dresses, George, you know, are in disorder—What if we should postpone the happiness till to-morrow?—To-morrow at her own house—It will be every bit as convenient—and rather more respectful—To-morrow let it be. [*Offering to go.*]

*Miss Nev.* By no means, sir. Your ceremony will displease her. The disorder of your dress will show the ardour of your impatience. Besides, she knows you are in the house, and will permit you to see her.

*Marl.* Oh, the devil! How shall I support it? Hem! hem! Hastings, you must not go. You are to assist me, you know. I shall be confoundedly ridiculous. Yet, hang it! I'll take courage. Hem!

*Hast.* Pshaw, man! it's but the first plunge, and all's over. She's but a woman, you know.

*Marl.* And, of all women, she that I dread most to encounter.

*Enter* MISS HARDCASTLE, *as returned from walking, a bonnet,*[2] *etc.*

*Hast.* [*introducing them*]. Miss Hardcastle, Mr. Marlow; I'm proud of bringing two persons of such merit together, that only want to know, to esteem each other.

*Miss Hard.* [*aside*]. Now for meeting my modest gentleman with a demure face, and quite in his own manner. [*After a pause, in which he appears very*

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[1] **the laws of marriage are respected:** On the first night this was taken as an attack on the Royal Marriage Act of 1772, which forbade the marriage of any descendant of George II without the consent of the king (George III).

[2] **bonnet:** Kate's bonnet is an important aid to the plot. She wears, usually, a *calash*, which practically hides her face.

*uneasy and disconcerted.*] I'm glad of your safe arrival, sir—I'm told you had some accidents by the way.

*Marl.* Only a few, madam. Yes, we had some. Yes, madam, a good many accidents, but should be sorry—madam—or rather glad of any accidents—that are so agreeably concluded. Hem!

*Hast.* [*to him*]. You never spoke better in your whole life. Keep it up, and I'll insure you the victory.

*Miss Hard.* I'm afraid you flatter, sir. You that have seen so much of the finest company can find little entertainment in an obscure corner of the country.

*Marl.* [*gathering courage*]. I have lived, indeed, in the world, madam; but I have kept very little company. I have been but an observer upon life, madam, while others were enjoying it.

*Miss Nev.* But that, I am told, is the way to enjoy it at last.

*Hast.* [*to him*]. Cicero never spoke better. Once more, and you are confirmed in assurance for ever.

*Marl.* [*to him*]. Hem! Stand by me then, and when I'm down, throw in a word or two to set me up again.

*Miss Hard.* An observer, like you, upon life, were, I fear, disagreeably employed, since you must have had much more to censure than to approve.

*Marl.* Pardon me, madam. I was always willing to be amused. The folly of most people is rather an object of mirth than uneasiness.

*Hast.* [*to him*]. Bravo, bravo. Never spoke so well in your whole life. Well, Miss Hardcastle, I see that you and Mr. Marlow are going to be very good company. I believe our being here will but embarrass the interview.

*Marl.* Not in the least, Mr. Hastings. We like your company of all things. [*To him.*] Zounds, George, sure you won't go? how can you leave us?

*Hast.* Our presence will but spoil conversation, so we'll retire to the next room. [*To him.*] You don't consider, man, that we are to manage a little *tête-à-tête* of our own. [*Exeunt*

*Miss Hard.* [*after a pause*]. But you have not been wholly an observer, I presume, sir: the ladies, I should hope, have employed some part of your addresses.

*Marl.* [*relapsing into timidity*]. Pardon me, madam, I—I—I—as yet have studied—only—to—deserve them.

*Miss Hard.* And that, some say, is the very worst way to obtain them.

*Marl.* Perhaps so, madam. But I love to converse only with the more grave and sensible part of the sex.—But I'm afraid I grow tiresome.

*Miss Hard.* Not at all, sir; there is nothing I like so much as grave conversation myself; I could hear it for ever. Indeed, I have often been surprised how a man of sentiment could ever admire those light, airy pleasures, where nothing reaches the heart.

*Marl.* It's—a disease—of the mind, madam. In the variety of tastes there must be some who, wanting a relish—for—um—a—um—

*Miss Hard.* I understand you, sir. There must be some, who, wanting a relish for refined pleasures, pretend to despise what they are incapable of tasting.

*Marl.* My meaning, madam, but infinitely better expressed. And I can't help observing—a—

*Miss Hard.* [*aside*]. Who could ever suppose this fellow impudent upon some occasions! [*To him.*] You were going to observe, sir—

*Marl.* I was observing, madam—I protest, madam, I forget what I was going to observe.

*Miss Hard.* [*aside*]. I vow and so do I. [*To him.*] You were observing, sir, that in this age of hypocrisy—something about hypocrisy, sir.

*Marl.* Yes, madam. In this age of hypocrisy there are few who upon strict inquiry do not—a—a—a—

*Miss Hard.* I understand you perfectly, sir.

*Marl.* [*aside*]. Egad! and that's more than I do myself.

*Miss Hard.* You mean that, in this hypocritical age, there are a few who do not condemn in public what they practise in private, and think they pay every debt to virtue when they praise it.

*Marl.* True, madam; those who have most virtue in their mouths have least of it in their bosoms. But I'm sure I tire you, madam.

*Miss Hard.* Not in the least, sir; there's something so agreeable and spirited in your manner, such life and force—pray, sir, go on.

*Marl.* Yes, madam, I was saying—that there are some occasions—when a total want of courage, madam, destroys all the—and puts us—upon—a—a—a—

*Miss Hard.* I agree with you entirely; a want of courage upon some occasions assumes the appearance of ignorance, and betrays us when we most want to excel. I beg you'll proceed.

*Marl.* Yes, madam. Morally speaking, madam—but I see Miss Neville expecting us in the next room. I would not intrude for the world.

*Miss Hard.* I protest, sir, I never was more agreeably entertained in all my life. Pray, go on.

*Marl.* Yes, madam, I was—But she beckons us to join her. Madam, shall I do myself the honour to attend you?

*Miss Hard.* Well, then, I'll follow.

*Marl.* [*aside*]. This pretty smooth dialogue has done for me. [*Exit*

*Miss Hard.* [*alone*]. Ha! ha! ha! Was there ever such a sober, sentimental interview? I'm certain he scarce looked in my face the whole time. Yet the fellow, but for his unaccountable bashfulness, is pretty well too. He has good sense, but then so buried in his fears, that it fatigues one more than ignorance. If I could teach him a little confidence, it would be doing somebody that I know of a piece of service. But who is that somebody?—That, faith, is a question I can scarce answer. [*Exit*

*Enter* TONY *and* MISS NEVILLE, *followed by* MRS. HARDCASTLE *and* HASTINGS

*Tony.* What do you follow me for, cousin Con? I wonder you're not ashamed to be so very engaging.

*Miss Nev.* I hope, cousin, one may speak to one's own relations, and not be to blame.

*Tony.* Ay, but I know what sort of a relation you want to make me, though; but it won't do. I tell you, cousin Con, it won't do; so I beg you'll keep your distance. I want no nearer relationship. [*She follows, coquetting him, to the back scene.*]

*Mrs. Hard.* Well! I vow, Mr. Hastings, you are very entertaining. There's nothing in the world I love to talk of so much as London, and the fashions, though I was never there myself.

*Hast.* Never there! You amaze me! From your air and manner, I concluded you had been bred all your life either at Ranelagh, St. James's, or Tower Wharf.[1]

*Mrs. Hard.* O, sir! you're only pleased to say so. We country persons can have no manner at all. I'm in love with the town, and that serves to raise me above some of our neighbouring rustics; but who can have a manner that has never seen the Pantheon,[2] the Grotto Gardens, the Borough,[3] and such places where the nobility chiefly resort? All I can do is to enjoy London at second-hand. I take care to know every *tête-à-tête* from the Scandalous Magazine,[4] and have all the fashions, as they come out, in a letter from the two Miss Rickets of Crooked Lane. Pray, how do you like this head, Mr. Hastings?

*Hast.* Extremely elegant and *degagée*,[5] upon my word, madam. Your friseur[6] is a Frenchman, I suppose?

*Mrs. Hard.* I protest, I dressed it myself from a print in the Ladies' Memorandum-book for the last year.

*Hast.* Indeed! Such a head in a side-box, at the play-house, would draw as many gazers as my Lady Mayoress at a City Ball.

*Mrs. Hard.* I vow, since inoculation[7] began, there is no such thing to be seen as a plain woman; so one must dress a little particular, or one may escape in the crowd.

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[1] **Ranelagh . . . Wharf:** He is making fun of her. The first two were in fashionable London, the last in the slums.

[2] **Pantheon:** a concert room.

[3] **Grotto . . . Borough:** The first is a fashionable resort; the last, the opposite. She is revealing her ignorance of London.

[4] **Scandalous Magazine:** the *Town and Country Magazine.* See Garrick's *Prologue* to *The School for Scandal* for specimens of its contents. See also Act I, Sc. 1, l. 27 of the same play.

[5] **degagée:** loose, untidy.

[6] **friseur:** hairdresser.

[7] **inoculation:** introduced by Lady Mary Wortley Montagu in 1718.

*Hast.* But that can never be your case, madam, in any dress. [*Bowing.*]

*Mrs. Hard.* Yet, what signifies my dressing, when I have such a piece of antiquity by my side as Mr. Hardcastle: all I can say will never argue down a single button from his clothes. I have often wanted him to throw off his great flaxen wig, and where he was bald, to plaster it over, like my Lord Pately, with powder.

*Hast.* You are right, madam; for, as among the ladies there are none ugly, so among the men there are none old.

*Mrs. Hard.* But what do you think his answer was? Why, with his usual Gothic[1] vivacity, he said I only wanted him to throw off his wig to convert it into a *tête* for my own wearing!

*Hast.* Intolerable! At your age you may wear what you please, and it must become you.

*Mrs. Hard.* Pray, Mr. Hastings, what do you take to be the most fashionable age about town?

*Hast.* Some time ago, forty was all the mode; but I'm told the ladies intend to bring up fifty for the ensuing winter.

*Mrs. Hard.* Seriously? Then I shall be too young for the fashion!

*Hast.* No lady begins now to put on jewels till she's past forty. For instance, miss there, in a polite circle, would be considered as a child, a mere maker of samplers.

*Mrs. Hard.* And yet Mrs. Niece thinks herself as much a woman, and is as fond of jewels, as the oldest of us all.

*Hast.* Your niece, is she? And that young gentleman,—a brother of yours, I should presume?

*Mrs. Hard.* My son, sir. They are contracted to each other. Observe their little sports. They fall in and out ten times a-day, as if they were man and wife already. [*To them.*] Well, Tony, child, what soft things are you saying to your cousin Constance, this evening?

*Tony.* I have been saying no soft things; but that it's very hard to be followed about so. Ecod! I've not a place in the house now that's left to myself, but the stable.

*Mrs. Hard.* Never mind him, Con, my dear. He's in another story behind your back.

*Miss Nev.* There's something generous in my cousin's manner. He falls out before faces to be forgiven in private.

*Tony.* That's a damned confounded —crack.

*Mrs. Hard.* Ah! he's a sly one. Don't you think they're like each other about the mouth, Mr. Hastings? The Blenkinsop mouth to a T. They're of a size too. Back to back, my pretties, that Mr. Hastings may see you. Come, Tony.

*Tony.* You had as good not make me, I tell you. [*Measuring.*]

*Miss Nev.* O lud! he has almost cracked my head.

*Mrs. Hard.* O, the monster! For shame, Tony. You a man, and behave so!

*Tony.* If I'm a man, let me have my fortin. Ecod! I'll not be made a fool of no longer.

*Mrs. Hard.* Is this, ungrateful boy, all that I'm to get for the pains I have taken in your education? I that have rocked you in your cradle, and fed that pretty mouth with a spoon! Did not I work that waistcoat to make you genteel? Did not I prescribe for you every day, and weep while the receipt was operating?

*Tony.* Ecod! you had reason to weep, for you have been dosing me ever since I was born. I have gone through every receipt in the Complete Huswife ten times over; and you have thoughts of coursing me through Quincy[2] next spring. But, ecod! I tell you, I'll not be made a fool of no longer.

*Mrs. Hard.* Wasn't it all for your good, viper? Wasn't it all for your good?

*Tony.* I wish you'd let me and my good alone, then. Snubbing this way when I'm in spirits! If I'm to have any good, let it come of itself; not to keep dinging it, dinging it into one so.

*Mrs. Hard.* That's false; I never see you when you're in spirits. No, Tony, you then go to the ale-house or kennel. I'm never to be delighted with your agreeable wild notes, unfeeling monster!

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[1] **Gothic:** rude (pertaining to barbarous times).

[2] **Quincy:** *The Complete English Dispensatory* by John Quincey.

*Tony.* Ecod! mamma, your own notes are the wildest of the two.

*Mrs. Hard.* Was ever the like? But I see he wants to break my heart, I see he does.

*Hast.* Dear madam, permit me to lecture the young gentleman a little. I'm certain I can persuade him to his duty.

*Mrs. Hard.* Well! I must retire. Come, Constance, my love. You see, Mr. Hastings, the wretchedness of my situation: was ever poor woman so plagued with a dear, sweet, pretty, provoking, undutiful boy.

[*Exeunt* MRS. HARDCASTLE *and* MISS NEVILLE

HASTINGS, TONY

*Tony* [*singing*]. "There was a young man riding by, and fain would have his will. Rang do didlo dee." Don't mind her. Let her cry. It's the comfort of her heart. I have seen her and sister cry over a book for an hour together, and they said they liked the book the better the more it made them cry.

*Hast.* Then you're no friend to the ladies, I find, my pretty young gentleman?

*Tony.* That's as I find 'um.

*Hast.* Not to her of your mother's choosing, I dare answer? And yet she appears to me a pretty well-tempered girl.

*Tony.* That's because you don't know her as well as I. Ecod! I know every inch about her; and there's not a more bitter cantankerous toad in all Christendom!

*Hast.* [*aside*]. Pretty encouragement this for a lover!

*Tony.* I have seen her since the height of that. She has as many tricks as a hare in a thicket, or a colt the first day's breaking.

*Hast.* To me she appears sensible and silent!

*Tony.* Ay, before company. But when she's with her playmates, she's as loud as a hog in a gate.

*Hast.* But there is a meek modesty about her that charms me.

*Tony.* Yes, but curb her never so little, she kicks up, and you're flung in a ditch.

*Hast.* Well, but you must allow her a little beauty.—Yes, you must allow her some beauty.

*Tony.* Bandbox! She's all a made-up thing, mun. Ah! could you but see Bet Bouncer of these parts, you might then talk of beauty. Ecod! she has two eyes as black as sloes, and cheeks as broad and red as a pulpit cushion. She'd make two of she.

*Hast.* Well, what say you to a friend that would take this bitter bargain off your hands?

*Tony.* Anon!

*Hast.* Would you thank him that would take Miss Neville, and leave you to happiness and your dear Betsy?

*Tony.* Ay; but where is there such a friend, for who would take her?

*Hast.* I am he. If you but assist me, I'll engage to whip her off to France, and you shall never hear more of her.

*Tony.* Assist you! Ecod, I will, to the last drop of my blood. I'll clap a pair of horses to your chaise that shall trundle you off in a twinkling, and may be get you a part of her fortin besides, in jewels, that you little dream of.

*Hast.* My dear 'Squire, this looks like a lad of spirit.

*Tony.* Come along, then, and you shall see more of my spirit before you have done with me. [*Singing.*]

"We are the boys
That fears no noise,
Where the thundering cannons roar."

[*Exeunt*

## ACT III

### SCENE I

### *The House*

*Enter* HARDCASTLE, *alone*

*Hard.* What could my old friend Sir Charles mean by recommending his son as the modestest young man in town? To me he appears the most impudent piece of brass that ever spoke with a tongue. He has taken possession of the easy chair by the fire-side already. He took his boots off in the parlour, and desired me to see them taken care of. I'm desirous to know how his impudence affects my daughter.—She will certainly be shocked at it.

*Enter* Miss Hardcastle, *plainly dressed*

*Hard.* Well, my Kate, I see you have changed your dress, as I bid you; and yet, I believe, there was no great occasion.

*Miss Hard.* I find such a pleasure, sir, in obeying your commands, that I take care to observe them without ever debating their propriety.

*Hard.* And yet, Kate, I sometimes give you some cause, particularly when I recommended my modest gentleman to you as a lover to-day.

*Miss Hard.* You taught me to expect something extraordinary, and I find the original exceeds the description.

*Hard.* I was never so surprised in my life! He has quite confounded all my faculties!

*Miss Hard.* I never saw anything like it; and a man of the world, too!

*Hard.* Ay, he learned it all abroad,—what a fool was I, to think a young man could learn modesty by travelling. He might as soon learn wit at a masquerade.

*Miss Hard.* It seems all natural to him.

*Hard.* A good deal assisted by bad company and a French dancing-master.

*Miss Hard.* Sure, you mistake, papa! A French dancing-master could never have taught him that timid look,—that awkward address,—that bashful manner—

*Hard.* Whose look? whose manner, child?

*Miss Hard.* Mr. Marlow's: his *mauvaise honte*,[1] his timidity, struck me at the first sight.

*Hard.* Then your first sight deceived you; for I think him one of the most brazen first sights that ever astonished my senses.

*Miss Hard.* Sure, sir, you rally! I never saw any one so modest.

*Hard.* And can you be serious! I never saw such a bouncing, swaggering puppy since I was born. Bully Dawson[2] was but a fool to him.

*Miss Hard.* Surprising! He met me with a respectful bow, a stammering voice, and a look fixed on the ground.

*Hard.* He met me with a loud voice, a lordly air, and a familiarity that made my blood freeze again.

*Miss Hard.* He treated me with diffidence and respect; censured the manners of the age; admired the prudence of girls that never laughed; tired me with apologies for being tiresome; then left the room with a bow, and "Madam, I would not for the world detain you."

*Hard.* He spoke to me as if he knew me all his life before; asked twenty questions, and never waited for an answer; interrupted my best remarks with some silly pun; and when I was in my best story of the Duke of Marlborough and Prince Eugene, he asked if I had not a good hand at making punch. Yes, Kate, he asked your father if he was a maker of punch.

*Miss Hard.* One of us must certainly be mistaken.

*Hard.* If he be what he has shown himself, I'm determined he shall never have my consent.

*Miss Hard.* And if he be the sullen thing I take him, he shall never have mine.

*Hard.* In one thing, then, we are agreed—to reject him.

*Miss Hard.* Yes—but upon conditions. For if you should find him less impudent, and I more presuming; if you find him more respectful, and I more importunate—I don't know—the fellow is well enough for a man—Certainly we don't meet many such at a horse-race in the country.

*Hard.* If we should find him so—But that's impossible. The first appearance has done my business. I'm seldom deceived in that.

*Miss Hard.* And yet there may be many good qualities under that first appearance.

*Hard.* Ay, when a girl finds a fellow's outside to her taste, she then sets about guessing the rest of his furniture. With her, a smooth face stands for good sense, and a genteel figure for every virtue.

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[1] **mauvaise honte:** bashfulness.

[2] **Bully Dawson:** a notorious London bully and sharper of the 17th Century. See Sir *Roger de Coverley's* encounter with him in *The Spectator*, No. 2.

*Miss Hard.* I hope, sir, a conversation begun with a compliment to my good sense won't end with a sneer at my understanding?

*Hard.* Pardon me, Kate. But if young Mr. Brazen can find the art of reconciling contradictions, he may please us both, perhaps.

*Miss Hard.* And as one of us must be mistaken, what if we go to make further discoveries?

*Hard.* Agreed. But depend on't, I'm in the right.

*Miss Hard.* And, depend on't, I'm not much in the wrong. [*Exeunt*

*Enter* Tony, *running in with a casket*

*Tony.* Ecod! I have got them. Here they are. My cousin Con's necklaces, bobs and all. My mother shan't cheat the poor souls out of their fortin neither. O, my genus! is that you?

*Enter* Hastings

*Hast.* My dear friend, how have you managed with your mother? I hope you have amused her with pretending love for your cousin, and that you are willing to be reconciled at last? Our horses will be refreshed in a short time, and we shall soon be ready to set off.

*Tony.* And here's something to bear your charges by the way,—[*giving the casket.*] your sweetheart's jewels. Keep them; and hang those, I say, that would rob you of one of them!

*Hast.* But how have you procured them from your mother?

*Tony.* Ask me no questions, and I'll tell you no fibs. I procured them by the rule of thumb. If I had not a key to every drawer in mother's bureau, how could I go to the alehouse so often as I do? An honest man may rob himself of his own at any time.

*Hast.* Thousands do it every day. But to be plain with you; Miss Neville is endeavouring to procure them from her aunt this very instant. If she succeeds, it will be the most delicate way at least of obtaining them.

*Tony.* Well, keep them, until you know how it will be. But I know how it will be well enough; she'd as soon part with the only sound tooth in her head.

*Hast.* But I dread the effects of her resentment when she finds she has lost them.

*Tony.* Never you mind her resentment, leave *me* to manage that. I don't value her resentment the bounce of a cracker. Zounds! here they are! Morrice[1]! Prance! [*Exit* Hastings

Tony, Mrs. Hardcastle Miss Neville

*Mrs. Hard.* Indeed, Constance, you amaze me. Such a girl as you want jewels? It will be time enough for jewels, my dear, twenty years hence, when your beauty begins to want repairs.

*Miss Nev.* But what will repair beauty at forty will certainly improve it at twenty, madam.

*Mrs. Hard.* Yours, my dear, can admit of none. That natural blush is beyond a thousand ornaments. Besides, child, jewels are quite out at present. Don't you see half the ladies of our acquaintance, my Lady Kill-day-light, and Mrs. Crump, and the rest of them, carry their jewels to town, and bring nothing but paste and marcasites[2] back?

*Miss Nev.* But who knows, madam, but somebody that shall be nameless would like me best with all my little finery about me?

*Mrs. Hard.* Consult your glass, my dear, and then see if, with such a pair of eyes, you want any better sparklers. What do you think, Tony, my dear? Does your cousin Con want any jewels, in your eyes, to set off her beauty?

*Tony.* That's as thereafter may be.

*Miss Nev.* My dear aunt, if you knew how it would oblige me.

*Mrs. Hard.* A parcel of old-fashioned rose and table-cut things.[3] They would make you look like the court of King

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[1] Morrice: Dance!

[2] marcasites: a mineral used for cheap jewelry; "fool's gold."

[3] rose . . . things: the simpler cuttings used for smaller and less expensive stones; with fewer facets than in brilliants.

Solomon at a puppet-show. Besides, I believe I can't readily come at them. They may be missing, for aught I know to the contrary.

*Tony* [*apart to* Mrs. Hardcastle]. Then why don't you tell her so at once, as she's so longing for them? Tell her they're lost. It's the only way to quiet her. Say they're lost, and call me to bear witness.

*Mrs. Hard.* [*apart to* Tony]. You know, my dear, I'm only keeping them for you. So if I say they're gone, you'll bear me witness, will you? He! he! he!

*Tony* [*apart to* Mrs. Hardcastle]. Never fear me. Ecod! I'll say I saw them taken out with my own eyes.

*Miss Nev.* I desire them but for a day, madam. Just to be permitted to show them as relics, and then they may be locked up again.

*Mrs. Hard.* To be plain with you, my dear Constance, if I could find them, you should have them. They're missing, I assure you. Lost, for aught I know; but we must have patience wherever they are.

*Miss Nev.* I'll not believe it; this is but a shallow pretence to deny me. I know they are too valuable to be so slightly kept, and as you are to answer for the loss—

*Mrs. Hard.* Don't be alarmed, Constance. If they be lost, I must restore an equivalent. But my son knows they are missing, and not to be found.

*Tony.* That I can bear witness to. They are missing, and not to be found; I'll take my oath on't.

*Mrs. Hard.* You must learn resignation, my dear; for though we lose our fortune, yet we should not lose our patience. See me, how calm I am.

*Miss Nev.* Ay, people are generally calm at the misfortunes of others.

*Mrs. Hard.* Now, I wonder a girl of your good sense should waste a thought upon such trumpery. We shall soon find them; and, in the mean time, you shall make use of my garnets till your jewels be found.

*Miss Nev.* I detest garnets!

*Mrs. Hard.* The most becoming things in the world to set off a clear complexion. You have often seen how well they look upon me. You *shall* have them. [*Exit*

*Miss Nev.* I dislike them of all things. You shan't stir.—Was ever any thing so provoking, to mislay my own jewels, and force me to wear her trumpery?

*Tony.* Don't be a fool. If she gives you the garnets, take what you can get. The jewels are your own already. I have stolen them out of her bureau, and she does not know it. Fly to your spark; he'll tell you more of the matter. Leave me to manage her.

*Miss Nev.* My dear cousin!

*Tony.* Vanish. She's here, and has missed them already. [*Exit* Miss Neville.] Zounds! how she fidgets and spits about like a Catherine wheel.

*Enter* Mrs. Hardcastle

*Mrs. Hard.* Confusion! thieves! robbers! we are cheated, plundered, broke open, undone.

*Tony.* What's the matter, what's the matter, mamma? I hope nothing has happened to any of the good family!

*Mrs. Hard.* We are robbed. My bureau has been broke open, the jewels taken out, and I'm undone.

*Tony.* Oh! is that all? Ha! ha! ha! By the laws I never saw it better acted in my life. Ecod, I thought you was ruined in earnest, ha! ha! ha!

*Mrs. Hard.* Why, boy, I *am* ruined in earnest. My bureau has been broke open, and all taken away.

*Tony.* Stick to that; ha! ha! ha! stick to that. I'll bear witness, you know; call me to bear witness.

*Mrs. Hard.* I tell you, Tony, by all that's precious, the jewels are gone, and I shall be ruined forever.

*Tony.* Sure I know they're gone, and I am to say so.

*Mrs. Hard.* My dearest Tony, but hear me. They're gone, I say.

*Tony.* By the laws, mamma, you make me for to laugh, ha! ha! I know who took them well enough, ha! ha! ha!

*Mrs. Hard.* Was there ever such a blockhead, that can't tell the difference between jest and earnest! I can tell you I'm not in jest, booby!

*Tony.* That's right, that's right; you must be in a bitter passion, and then nobody will suspect either of us. I'll bear witness that they are gone.

*Mrs. Hard.* Was there ever such a cross-grained brute, that won't hear me! Can you bear witness that you're no better than a fool? Was ever poor woman so beset with fools on one hand, and thieves on the other!

*Tony.* I can bear witness to that.

*Mrs. Hard.* Bear witness again, you blockhead, you, and I'll turn you out of the room directly. My poor niece, what will become of her? Do you laugh, you unfeeling brute, as if you enjoyed my distress?

*Tony.* I can bear witness to that.

*Mrs. Hard.* Do you insult me, monster? I'll teach you to vex your mother, I will!

*Tony.* I can bear witness to that.

[*He runs off; she follows him*

*Enter* Miss Hardcastle *and* Maid

*Miss Hard.* What an unaccountable creature is that brother of mine, to send them to the house as an inn, ha! ha! I don't wonder at his impudence.

*Maid.* But what is more, madam, the young gentleman, as you passed by in your present dress, asked me if you were the bar-maid. He mistook you for the bar-maid, madam!

*Miss Hard.* Did he? Then, as I live, I'm resolved to keep up the delusion. Tell me, Pimple, how do you like my present dress? Don't you think I look something like Cherry[1] in the *Beaux' Stratagem?*

*Maid.* It's the dress, madam, that every lady wears in the country, but when she visits or receives company.

*Miss Hard.* And are you sure he does not remember my face or person?

*Maid.* Certain of it!

*Miss Hard.* I vow, I thought so; for though we spoke for some time together, yet his fears were such that he never once looked up during the interview. Indeed, if he had, my bonnet would have kept him from seeing me.

*Maid.* But what do you hope from keeping him in his mistake?

*Miss Hard.* In the first place, I shall be seen, and that is no small advantage to a girl who brings her face to market. Then I shall perhaps make an acquaintance, and that's no small victory gained over one who never addresses any but the wildest of her sex. But my chief aim is to take my gentleman off his guard, and, like an invisible champion of romance, examine the giant's force before I offer to combat.

*Maid.* But are you sure you can act your part, and disguise your voice, so that he may mistake that, as he has already mistaken your person?

*Miss Hard.* Never fear me. I think I have got the true bar cant.—Did your honour call?—Attend the Lion there.—Pipes and tobacco for the Angel.—The Lamb[2] has been outrageous this half hour.

*Maid.* It will do, madam. But he's here. [*Exit* Maid

*Enter* Marlow

*Marl.* What a bawling in every part of the house; I have scarce a moment's repose. If I go to the best room, there I find my host and his story; if I fly to the gallery, there we have my hostess with her curtesy down to the ground. I have at last got a moment to myself, and now for recollection. [*Walks and muses.*]

*Miss Hard.* Did you call, sir? Did your honour call?

*Marl.* [*musing*]. As for Miss Hardcastle, she's too grave and sentimental for me.

*Miss Hard.* Did your honour call? [*She still places herself before him, he turning away.*]

*Marl.* No, child! [*Musing.*] Besides, from the glimpse I had of her, I think she squints.

*Miss Hard.* I'm sure, sir, I heard the bell ring.

*Marl.* No, no! [*Musing.*] I have pleased my father, however, by coming down, and I'll to-morrow please myself by returning. [*Taking out his tablets and perusing.*]

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[1] Cherry: The innkeeper's daughter in this play by Farquhar.

[2] The Lamb: Rooms were named, not numbered.

*Miss Hard.* Perhaps the other gentleman called, sir?

*Marl.* I tell you no.

*Miss Hard.* I should be glad to know, sir. We have such a parcel of servants.

*Marl.* No, no, I tell you. [*Looks full in her face.*] Yes, child, I think I did call. I wanted—I wanted—I vow, child, you are vastly handsome!

*Miss Hard.* O la, sir, you'll make one ashamed.

*Marl.* Never saw a more sprightly, malicious eye. Yes, yes, my dear, I did call. Have you got any of your—a—what d'ye call it in the house?

*Miss Hard.* No, sir, we have been out of that these ten days.

*Marl.* One may call in this house, I find, to very little purpose. Suppose I should call for a taste, just by way of trial, of the nectar of your lips; perhaps I might be disappointed in that too?

*Miss Hard.* Nectar? nectar? That's a liquor there's no call for in these parts. French, I suppose. We keep no French wines here, sir.

*Marl.* Of true English growth, I assure you.

*Miss Hard.* Then it's odd I should not know it. We brew all sorts of wines in this house, and I have lived here these eighteen years.

*Marl.* Eighteen years! Why, one would think, child, you kept the bar before you were born. How old are you?

*Miss Hard.* O! sir, I must not tell my age. They say women and music should never be dated.

*Marl.* To guess at this distance, you can't be much above forty. [*Approaching.*] Yet nearer, I don't think so much. [*Approaching.*] By coming close to some women, they look younger still; but when we come very close indeed—[*Attempting to kiss her.*]

*Miss Hard.* Pray, sir, keep your distance. One would think you wanted to know one's age as they do horses, by mark of mouth.

*Marl.* I protest, child, you use me extremely ill. If you keep me at this distance, how is it possible you and I can be ever acquainted?

*Miss Hard.* And who wants to be acquainted with you? I want no such acquaintance, not I. I'm sure you did not treat Miss Hardcastle, that was here a while ago, in this obstropalous[1] manner. I'll warrant me, before her you looked dashed, and kept bowing to the ground, and talked, for all the world, as if you were before a justice of peace.

*Marl.* [*aside*]. Egad, she has hit it, sure enough! [*To her.*] In awe of her, child? Ha! ha! ha! A mere awkward squinting thing! No, no! I find you don't know me. I laughed and rallied her a little; but I was unwilling to be too severe. No, I could not be too severe, curse me!

*Miss Hard.* Oh, then, sir, you are a favourite, I find, among the ladies?

*Marl.* Yes, my dear, a great favourite. And yet, hang me, I don't see what they find in me to follow. At the Ladies' Club in town I'm called their agreeable Rattle. Rattle, child, is not my real name, but one I'm known by. My name is Solomons; Mr. Solomons, my dear, at your service. [*Offering to salute her.*]

*Miss Hard.* Hold, sir; you are introducing me to your club, not to yourself. And you're so great a favourite there, you say?

*Marl.* Yes, my dear. There's Mrs. Mantrap, Lady Betty Blackleg, the Countess of Sligo, Mrs. Longhorns, old Miss Biddy Buckskin, and your humble servant, keep up the spirit of the place.

*Miss Hard.* Then it's a very merry place, I suppose?

*Marl.* Yes, as merry as cards, suppers, wine, and old women can make us.

*Miss Hard.* And their agreeable Rattle, ha! ha! ha!

*Marl.* [*aside*]. Egad! I don't quite like this chit. She looks knowing, methinks. You laugh, child?

*Miss Hard.* I can't but laugh to think what time they all have for minding their work or their family.

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[1] obstropalous: Kate is, of course, mispronouncing the word in keeping with her assumed rôle.

*Marl.* [*aside*]. All's well; she don't laugh at me. [*To her.*] Do you ever work, child?

*Miss Hard.* Ay, sure. There's not a screen or a quilt in the whole house but what can bear witness to that.

*Marl.* Odso! Then you must show me your embroidery. I embroider and draw patterns myself a little. If you want a judge of your work, you must apply to me. [*Seizing her hand.*]

*Enter* HARDCASTLE, *who stands in surprise*

*Miss Hard.* Ay, but the colours don't look well by candlelight. You shall see all in the morning. [*Struggling.*]

*Marl.* And why not now, my angel? Such beauty fires beyond the power of resistance.—Pshaw! the father here! My old luck: I never nicked seven that I did not throw ames-ace[1] three times following. [*Exit* MARLOW

*Hard.* So, madam! So I find *this* is your *modest* lover. This is your humble admirer, that kept his eyes fixed on the ground, and only adored at humble distance. Kate, Kate, art thou not ashamed to deceive your father so?

*Miss Hard.* Never trust me, dear papa, but he's still the modest man I first took him for; you'll be convinced of it as well as I.

*Hard.* By the hand of my body, I believe his impudence is infectious! Didn't I see him seize your hand? Didn't I see him haul you about like a milkmaid? And now you talk of his respect and his modesty, forsooth!

*Miss Hard.* But if I shortly convince you of his modesty, that he has only the faults that will pass off with time, and the virtues that will improve with age, I hope you'll forgive him.

*Hard.* The girl would actually make one run mad! I tell you I'll not be convinced. I am convinced. He has scarcely been three hours in the house, and he has already encroached on all my prerogatives. You may like his impudence, and call it modesty; but my son-in-law, madam, must have very different qualifications.

*Miss Hard.* Sir, I ask but this night to convince you.

*Hard.* You shall not have half the time, for I have thoughts of turning him out this very hour.

*Miss Hard.* Give me that hour, then, and I hope to satisfy you.

*Hard.* Well, an hour let it be then. But I'll have no trifling with your father. All fair and open, do you mind me?

*Miss Hard.* I hope, sir, you have ever found that I considered your commands as my pride; for your kindness is such that my duty as yet has been inclination. [*Exeunt*

## ACT IV

### SCENE I

### *The House*

*Enter* HASTINGS *and* MISS NEVILLE

*Hast.* You surprise me; Sir Charles Marlow expected here this night! Where have you had your information?

*Miss Nev.* You may depend upon it. I just saw his letter to Mr. Hardcastle, in which he tells him he intends setting out in a few hours after his son.

*Hast.* Then, my Constance, all must be complete before he arrives. He knows me; and should he find me here, would discover my name, and perhaps, my designs, to the rest of the family.

*Miss Nev.* The jewels, I hope, are safe?

*Hast.* Yes, yes. I have sent them to Marlow, who keeps the keys of our baggage. In the mean time, I'll go to prepare matters for our elopement. I have had the 'Squire's promise of a fresh pair of horses; and, if I should not see him again, will write him further directions. [*Exit*

*Miss Nev.* Well, success attend you! In the mean time, I'll go amuse my aunt with the old pretence of a violent passion for my cousin. [*Exit*

*Enter* MARLOW, *followed by a* SERVANT

*Marl.* I wonder what Hastings could mean by sending me so valuable a thing as a casket to keep for him, when he knows the only place I have is the seat of a post-coach at an inn-door. Have you deposited the casket with the landlady, as I ordered you? Have you put it into her own hands?

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[1] ames-ace: the lowest throw.

*Servant.* Yes, your honour.

*Marl.* She said she'd keep it safe, did she?

*Serv.* Yes; she said she'd keep it safe enough; she asked me how I came by it; and she said she had a great mind to make me give an account of myself.

[*Exit* SERVANT

*Marl.* Ha! ha! ha! They're safe, however. What an unaccountable set of beings have we got amongst! This little bar-maid, though, runs in my head most strangely, and drives out the absurdities of all the rest of the family. She's mine, she must be mine, or I'm greatly mistaken.

*Enter* HASTINGS

*Hast.* Bless me! I quite forgot to tell her that I intended to prepare at the bottom of the garden. Marlow here, and in spirits too!

*Marl.* Give me joy, George! Crown me, shadow me with laurels! Well, George, after all, we modest fellows don't want for success among the women.

*Hast.* Some women, you mean. But what success has your honour's modesty been crowned with now that it grows so insolent upon us?

*Marl.* Didn't you see the tempting, brisk, lovely, little thing, that runs about the house with a bunch of keys to its girdle?

*Hast.* Well, and what then?

*Marl.* She's mine, you rogue, you. Such fire, such motion, such eyes, such lips—but, egad! she would not let me kiss them though.

*Hast.* But are you sure, so very sure of her?

*Marl.* Why, man, she talked of showing me her work above stairs, and I am to approve the pattern.

*Hast.* But how can you, Charles, go about to rob a woman of her honour?

*Marl.* Pshaw! pshaw! We all know the honour of the bar-maid of an inn. I don't intend to rob her, take my word for it.

*Hast.* I believe the girl has virtue.

*Marl.* And if she has, I should be the last man in the world that would attempt to corrupt it.

*Hast.* You have taken care, I hope, of the casket I sent you to lock up? It's in safety?

*Marl.* Yes, yes. It's safe enough. I have taken care of it. But how could you think the seat of a post-coach at an inn-door a place of safety? Ah! numskull! I have taken better precautions for you than you did for yourself—I have—

*Hast.* What?

*Marl.* I have sent it to the landlady to keep for you.

*Hast.* To the landlady!

*Marl.* The landlady.

*Hast.* You did!

*Marl.* I did. She's to be answerable for its forthcoming, you know.

*Hast.* Yes, she'll bring it forth with a witness.

*Marl.* Wasn't I right? I believe you'll allow that I acted prudently upon this occasion.

*Hast.* [*aside*]. He must not see my uneasiness.

*Marl.* You seem a little disconcerted though, methinks. Sure, nothing has happened?

*Hast.* No, nothing. Never was in better spirits in all my life. And so you left it with the landlady, who, no doubt, very readily undertook the charge?

*Marl.* Rather too readily. For she not only kept the casket, but, through her great precaution, was going to keep the messenger too. Ha! ha! ha!

*Hast.* He! he! he! They're safe, however.

*Marl.* As a guinea in a miser's purse.

*Hast.* [*aside*]. So now all hopes of fortune are at an end, and we must set off without it. [*To him.*] Well, Charles, I'll leave you to your meditations on the pretty bar-maid, and, he! he! he! may you be as successful for yourself as you have been for me! [*Exit*

*Marl.* Thank ye, George: I ask no more. Ha! ha! ha!

*Enter* HARDCASTLE

*Hard.* I no longer know my own house. It's turned all topsey-turvey. His servants have got drunk already. I'll bear it no longer; and yet, from my respect for his father, I'll be calm. [*To him.*] Mr. Marlow, your servant. I'm your very humble servant. [*Bowing low.*]

*Marl.* Sir, your humble servant. [*Aside.*] What is to be the wonder now?

*Hard.* I believe, sir, you must be sensible, sir, that no man alive ought to be more welcome than your father's son, sir. I hope you think so?

*Marl.* I do from my soul, sir. I don't want much entreaty. I generally make my father's son welcome wherever he goes.

*Hard.* I believe you do, from my soul, sir. But though I say nothing to your own conduct, that of your servants is insufferable. Their manner of drinking is setting a very bad example in this house, I assure you.

*Marl.* I protest, my very good sir, that is no fault of mine. If they don't drink as they ought, they are to blame. I ordered them not to spare the cellar. I did, I assure you. [*To the side-scene.*] Here, let one of my servants come up. [*To him.*] My positive directions were, that as I did not drink myself, they should make up for my deficiencies below.

*Hard.* Then they had your orders for what they do? I'm satisfied!

*Marl.* They had, I assure you. You shall hear it from one of themselves.

*Enter* SERVANT, *drunk*

*Marl.* You, Jeremy! Come forward, sirrah! What were my orders? Were you not told to drink freely, and call for what you thought fit, for the good of the house?

*Hard.* [*aside*]. I begin to lose my patience.

*Jeremy.* Please your honour, liberty and Fleet Street forever! Though I'm but a servant, I'm as good as another man. I'll drink for no man before supper, sir, damme! Good liquor will sit upon a good supper, but a good supper will not sit upon—hiccup—upon my conscience, sir. [*Exit*

*Marl.* You see, my old friend, the fellow is as drunk as he can possibly be. I don't know what you'd have more, unless you'd have the poor devil soused in a beer-barrel.

*Hard.* Zounds! he'll drive me distracted, if I contain myself any longer. Mr. Marlow. Sir, I have submitted to your insolence for more than four hours, and I see no likelihood of its coming to an end. I'm now resolved to be master here, sir, and I desire that you and your drunken pack may leave my house directly.

*Marl.* Leave your house!—Sure, you jest, my good friend! What, when I am doing what I can to please you!

*Hard.* I tell you, sir, you don't please me; so I desire you'll leave my house.

*Marl.* Sure, you cannot be serious? At this time of night, and such a night? You only mean to banter me.

*Hard.* I tell you, sir, I'm serious! and, now that my passions are roused, I say this house is mine, sir; this house is mine, and I command you to leave it directly.

*Marl.* Ha! ha! ha! A puddle in a storm. I shan't stir a step, I assure you, [*In a serious tone.*] This your house, fellow! It's my house. This is my house. Mine, while I choose to stay. What right have you to bid me leave this house, sir? I never met with such impudence, curse me; never in my whole life before.

*Hard.* Nor I, confound me if ever I did! To come to my house, to call for what he likes, to turn me out of my own chair, to insult the family, to order his servants to get drunk, and then to tell me, "This house is mine, sir." By all that's impudent, it makes me laugh. Ha! ha! ha! Pray, sir, [*bantering*] as you take the house, what think you to taking the rest of the furniture? There's a pair of silver candlesticks, and there's a fire-screen, and here's a pair of brazen-nosed bellows; perhaps you may take a fancy to them?

*Marl.* Bring me your bill, sir; bring me your bill, and let's make no more words about it.

*Hard.* There are a set of prints, too. What think you of the Rake's Progress[1] for your own apartment?

*Marl.* Bring me your bill, I say; and I'll leave you and your infernal house directly.

*Hard.* Then there's a mahogany table that you may see your face in.

*Marl.* My bill, I say.

*Hard.* I had forgot the great chair for your own particular slumbers, after a hearty meal.

*Marl.* Zounds! bring me my bill, I say, and let's hear no more on't.

*Hard.* Young man, young man, from your father's letter to me, I was taught to expect a well-bred, modest man as a visitor here, but now I find him no better than a coxcomb and a bully; but he will be down here presently, and shall hear more of it. [*Exit*

*Marl.* How's this! Sure, I have not mistaken the house? Everything looks like an inn. The servants cry "Coming." The attendance is awkward; the bar-maid, too, to attend us. But she's here, and will further inform me. Whither so fast, child? A word with you.

*Enter* Miss Hardcastle

*Miss Hard.* Let it be short, then. I'm in a hurry.—[*Aside.*] I believe he begins to find out his mistake. But it's too soon quite to undeceive him.

*Marl.* Pray, child, answer me one question. What are you, and what may your business in this house be?

*Miss Hard.* A relation of the family, sir.

*Marl.* What, a poor relation?

*Miss Hard.* Yes, sir. A poor relation, appointed to keep the keys and to see that the guests want nothing in my power to give them.

*Marl.* That is, you act as the bar-maid of this inn.

*Miss Hard.* Inn! O law—What brought that into your head? One of the first families in the county keep an inn!—Ha! ha! ha! old Mr. Hardcastle's house an inn!

*Marl.* Mr. Hardcastle's house! Is this Mr. Hardcastle's house, child?

*Miss Hard.* Ay, sure. Whose else should it be?

*Marl.* So, then, all's out, and I have been damnably imposed on. O, confound my stupid head, I shall be laughed at over the whole town. I shall be stuck up in caricature in all the print-shops. The Dullissimo Macaroni.[2] To mistake this house of all others for an inn, and my father's old friend for an innkeeper! What a swaggering puppy must he take me for! What a silly puppy do I find myself! There again, may I be hanged, my dear, but I mistook you for the bar-maid.

*Miss Hard.* Dear me! dear me! I'm sure there's nothing in my *behaviour* to put me upon a level with one of that stamp.

*Marl.* Nothing, my dear, nothing. But I was in for a list of blunders, and could not help making you a subscriber. My stupidity saw everything the wrong way. I mistook your assiduity for assurance, and your simplicity for allurement. But it's over—this house I no more show *my* face in.

*Miss Hard.* I hope, sir, I have done nothing to disoblige you. I'm sure I should be sorry to affront any gentleman who has been so polite, and said so many civil things to me. I'm sure I should be sorry [*pretending to cry*] if he left the family on my account. I'm sure I should be sorry people said anything amiss, since I have no fortune but my character.

*Marl.* [*aside*]. By Heaven! she weeps. This is the first mark of tenderness I ever had from a modest woman, and it touches me. [*To her.*] Excuse me, my lovely girl; you are the only part of the family I leave with reluctance. But to be plain with you, the difference of our birth, fortune, and education, make an honourable connexion impossible; and I can never harbour a thought of seducing simplicity that trusted in my honour, or bringing ruin upon one whose only fault was being too lovely.

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[1] Rake's Progress: a series of famous engravings by William Hogarth.

[2] Macaroni: The dandies of the period were called "Macaroni."

*Miss Hard.* [*aside*]. Generous man! I now begin to admire him. [*To him.*] But I am sure my family is as good as Miss Hardcastle's; and though I'm poor, that's no great misfortune to a contented mind; and, until this moment, I never thought that it was bad to want fortune.

*Marl.* And why now, my pretty simplicity?

*Miss Hard.* Because it puts me at a distance from one that if I had a thousand pounds I would give it all to.

*Marl.* [*aside*]. This simplicity bewitches me so that if I stay I'm undone. I must make one bold effort, and leave her. [*To her.*] Your partiality in my favour, my dear, touches me most sensibly, and were I to live for myself alone, I could easily fix my choice. But I owe too much to the opinion of the world, too much to the authority of a father; so that—I can scarcely speak it—it affects me. Farewell! [*Exit*

*Miss Hard.* I never knew half his merit till now. He shall not go if I have power or art to detain him. I'll still preserve the character in which I *stooped to conquer*, but I will undeceive my papa, who, perhaps, may laugh him out of his resolution. [*Exit*

*Enter* TONY *and* MISS NEVILLE

*Tony.* Ay, you may steal for yourselves the next time. I have done my duty. She has got the jewels again, that's a sure thing; but she believes it was all a mistake of the servants.

*Miss Nev.* But, my dear cousin, sure you won't forsake us in this distress? If she in the least suspects that I am going off, I shall certainly be locked up, or sent to my aunt Pedigree's, which is ten times worse.

*Tony.* To be sure, aunts of all kinds are damned bad things. But what can I do? I have got you a pair of horses that will fly like Whistle-jacket;[1] and I'm sure you can't say but I have courted you nicely before her face. Here she comes; we must court a bit or two more, for fear she should suspect us. [*They retire and seem to fondle.*]

*Enter* MRS. HARDCASTLE

*Mrs. Hard.* Well, I was greatly fluttered, to be sure. But my son tells me it was all a mistake of the servants. I shan't be easy, however, till they are fairly married, and then let her keep her own fortune. But what do I see? fondling together, as I'm alive. I never saw Tony so sprightly before. Ah! have I caught you, my pretty doves? What, billing, exchanging glances, and broken murmurs? Ah!

*Tony.* As for murmurs, mother, we grumble a little now and then, to be sure. But there's no love lost between us.

*Mrs. Hard.* A mere sprinkling, Tony, upon the flame, only to make it burn brighter.

*Miss Nev.* Cousin Tony promises to give us more of his company at home. Indeed, he shan't leave us any more. It won't leave us, cousin Tony, will it?

*Tony.* O, it's a pretty creature! No, I'd sooner leave my horse in a pound, than leave you when you smile upon one so. Your laugh makes you so becoming.

*Miss Nev.* Agreeable cousin! Who can help admiring that natural humour, that pleasant, broad, red, thoughtless [*patting his cheek*]—ah! it's a bold face!

*Mrs. Hard.* Pretty innocence!

*Tony.* I'm sure I always loved cousin Con's hazel eyes, and her pretty long fingers, that she twists this way and that over haspicholls,[2] like a parcel of bobbins.

*Mrs. Hard.* Ah! he would charm the bird from the tree. I was never so happy before. My boy takes after his father, poor Mr. Lumpkin, exactly. The jewels, my dear Con, shall be yours incontinently. You shall have them. Isn't he a sweet boy, my dear? You shall be married to-morrow, and we'll put off the rest of his education, like Dr. Drowsy's sermons, to a fitter opportunity.

*Enter* DIGGORY

*Dig.* Where's the 'Squire? I have got a letter for your worship.

*Tony.* Give it to my mamma. She reads all my letters first.

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[1] Whistle-jacket: a famous race-horse.

[2] haspicholls: harpsichords.

*Dig.* I had orders to deliver it into your own hands.

*Tony.* Who does it come from?

*Dig.* Your worship mun ask that o' the letter itself. [*Exit* Diggory

*Tony.* I could wish to know, though. [*Turning the letter, and gazing on it.*]

*Miss Nev.* [*aside*]. Undone! undone! A letter to him from Hastings. I know the hand. If my aunt sees it, we are ruined forever. I'll keep her employed a little, if I can. [*To* Mrs. Hardcastle.] But I have not told you, madam, of my cousin's smart answer just now to Mr. Marlow. We so laughed—You must know, madam.—This way a little, for he must not hear us. [*They confer.*]

*Tony* [*still gazing*]. A damned cramp piece of penmanship as ever I saw in my life. I can read your print-hand very well. But here there are such handles, and shanks, and dashes that one can scarce tell the head from the tail. "To Anthony Lumpkin, Esquire." It's very odd, I can read the outside of my letters where my own name is, well enough. But when I come to open it, it's all—buzz. That's hard—very hard; for the inside of the letter is always the cream of the correspondence.

*Mrs. Hard.* Ha! ha! ha! Very well, very well. And so my son was too hard for the philosopher.

*Miss Nev.* Yes, madam; but you must hear the rest, madam. A little more this way, or he may hear us. You'll hear how he puzzled him again.

*Mrs. Hard.* He seems strangely puzzled now himself, methinks.

*Tony* [*still gazing*]. A damned up and down hand, as if it was disguised in liquor. [*Reading.*] "Dear Sir,"—Ay, that's that. Then there's an M, and a T, and an S, but whether the next be an izzard[1] or an R, confound me, I cannot tell!

*Mrs. Hard.* What's that, my dear? Can I give you any assistance?

*Miss Nev.* Pray, aunt, let me read it. Nobody reads a cramp hand better than I. [*Twitching the letter from her.*] Do you know who it is from?

*Tony.* Can't tell, except from Dick Ginger, the feeder.

*Miss Nev.* Ay, so it is. [*Pretending to read.*] Dear 'Squire, hoping that you're in health, as I am at this present. The gentlemen of the Shake-bag[2] club has cut the gentlemen of the Goose-green quite out of feather. The odds—um—odd battle—um—long fighting—um—here, here, it's all about cocks and fighting; it's of no consequence; here, put it up, put it up. [*Thrusting the crumpled letter upon him.*]

*Tony.* But I tell you, miss, it's of all the consequence in the world! I would not lose the rest of it for a guinea! Here, mother, do you make it out. Of no consequence! [*Giving* Mrs. Hardcastle *the letter.*]

*Mrs. Hard.* How's this? [*Reads.*] "Dear 'Squire, I'm now waiting for Miss Neville, with a post-chaise and pair, at the bottom of the garden, but I find my horses yet unable to perform the journey. I expect you'll assist us with a pair of fresh horses, as you promised. Dispatch is necessary, as the *hag* (ay, the hag) your mother, will otherwise suspect us. Yours, Hastings." Grant me patience. I shall run distracted! My rage chokes me!

*Miss Nev.* I hope, madam, you'll suspend your resentment for a few moments, and not impute to me any impertinence, or sinister design, that belongs to another.

*Mrs. Hard.* [*curtesying very low*]. Fine spoken madam; you are most miraculously polite and engaging, and quite the very pink of curtesy and circumspection, madam. [*Changing her tone.*] And you, you great ill-fashioned oaf, with scarce sense enough to keep your mouth shut: were you, too, joined against me? But I'll defeat all your plots in a moment. As for you, madam, since you have got a pair of fresh horses ready, it would be cruel to disappoint them. So, if you please, instead of running away with your spark, prepare this very moment to run off with *me.* Your old aunt Pedigree will keep you secure, I'll warrant me. You too, sir, may mount your horse, and guard us upon the way. Here, Thomas, Roger, Diggory! I'll show you that I wish you better than you do yourselves. [*Exit*

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[1] izzard: a Z.

[2] Shake-bag: a large fighting cock.

*Miss Nev.* So, now I'm completely ruined.

*Tony.* Ay, that's a sure thing.

*Miss Nev.* What better could be expected from being connected with such a stupid fool,—and after all the nods and signs I made him!

*Tony.* By the laws, miss, it was your own cleverness, and not my stupidity, that did your business. You were so nice and so busy with your Shake-bags and Goose-greens that I thought you could never be making believe.

*Enter* HASTINGS

*Hast.* So, sir, I find by my servant that you have shown my letter, and betrayed us. Was this well done, young gentleman?

*Tony.* Here's another. Ask miss, there, who betrayed you. Ecod, it was her doing, not mine.

*Enter* MARLOW

*Marl.* So I have been finely used here among you. Rendered contemptible, driven into ill-manners, despised, insulted, laughed at.

*Tony.* Here's another. We shall have old Bedlam broke loose presently.

*Miss Nev.* And there, sir, is the gentleman to whom we all owe every obligation.

*Marl.* What can I say to him, a mere boy, an idiot, whose ignorance and age are a protection.

*Hast.* A poor, contemptible booby, that would but disgrace correction.

*Miss Nev.* Yet with cunning and malice enough to make himself merry with all our embarrassments.

*Hast.* An insensible cub.

*Marl.* Replete with tricks and mischief.

*Tony.* Baw! damme, but I'll fight you both, one after the other—with baskets.[1]

*Marl.* As for him, he's below resentment. But your conduct, Mr. Hastings, requires an explanation You knew of my mistakes, yet would not undeceive me.

*Hast.* Tortured as I am with my own disappointments, is this a time for explanations? It is not friendly, Mr. Marlow.

*Marl.* But sir—

*Miss Nev.* Mr. Marlow, we never kept on your mistake, till it was too late to undeceive you. Be pacified.

*Enter* SERVANT

*Serv.* My mistress desires you'll get ready immediately, madam. The horses are putting to. Your hat and things are in the next room. We are to go thirty miles before morning.

[*Exit* SERVANT

*Miss Nev.* Well, well; I'll come presently.

*Marl.* [*to* HASTINGS]. Was it well done, sir, to assist in rendering me ridiculous? To hang me out for the scorn of all my acquaintance? Depend upon it, sir, I shall expect an explanation.

*Hast.* Was it well done, sir, if you're upon that subject, to deliver what I entrusted to yourself, to the care of another, sir?

*Miss Nev.* Mr. Hastings! Mr. Marlow! Why will you increase my distress by this groundless dispute? I implore, I entreat you—

*Enter* SERVANT

*Serv.* Your cloak, madam. My mistress is impatient.

*Miss Nev.* I come. [*Exit* SERVANT.] Pray, be pacified. If I leave you thus, I shall die with apprehension!

*Enter* SERVANT

*Serv.* Your fan, muff, and gloves, madam. The horses are waiting.

*Miss Nev.* O, Mr. Marlow! if you knew what a scene of constraint and ill-nature lies before me, I'm sure it would convert your resentment into pity.

*Marl.* I'm so distracted with a variety of passions that I don't know what I do. Forgive me, madam. George, forgive me. You know my hasty temper, and should not exasperate it.

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[1] baskets: a wickerwork headpiece.

*Hast.* The torture of my situation is my only excuse.

*Miss Nev.* Well, my dear Hastings, if you have that esteem for me that I think, that I am sure you have, your constancy for three years will but increase the happiness of our future connexion. If—

*Mrs. Hard.* [*within*]. Miss Neville. Constance, why, Constance, I say.

*Miss Nev.* I'm coming. Well, constancy, remember, constancy is the word. [*Exit followed by the* SERVANT

*Hast.* My heart! how can I support this! To be so near happiness, and such happiness!

*Marl.* [*to* TONY]. You see now, young gentleman, the effects of your folly. What might be amusement to you is here disappointment, and even distress.

*Tony* [*from a reverie*]. Ecod, I have hit it. It's here. Your hands. Yours, and yours, my poor Sulky. My boots there, ho!—Meet me, two hours hence at the bottom of the garden; and if you don't find Tony Lumpkin a more good-natured fellow than you thought for, I'll give you leave to take my best horse, and Bet Bouncer into the bargain. Come along. My boots, ho! [*Exeunt*

## ACT V

### SCENE [I]—*Continues*

*Enter* HASTINGS *and* SERVANT

*Hast.* You saw the old lady and Miss Neville drive off, you say?

*Serv.* Yes, your honour. They went off in a post-coach, and the young 'Squire went on horseback. They're thirty miles off by this time.

*Hast.* Then all my hopes are over.

*Serv.* Yes, sir. Old Sir Charles is arrived. He and the old gentleman of the house have been laughing at Mr. Marlow's mistake this half hour. They are coming this way.

*Hast.* Then I must not be seen. So now to my fruitless appointment at the bottom of the garden. This is about the time. [*Exit*

*Enter* SIR CHARLES *and* HARDCASTLE

*Hard.* Ha! ha! ha! The peremptory tone in which he sent forth his sublime commands!

*Sir Charles.* And the reserve with which I suppose he treated all your advances.

*Hard.* And yet he might have seen something in me above a common innkeeper, too.

*Sir Charles.* Yes, Dick, but he mistook you for an uncommon innkeeper; ha! ha! ha!

*Hard.* Well, I'm in too good spirits to think of anything but joy. Yes, my dear friend, this union of our families will make our personal friendships hereditary; and though my daughter's fortune is but small—

*Sir Charles.* Why, Dick, will you talk of fortune to *me?* My son is possessed of more than a competence already, and can want nothing but a good and virtuous girl to share his happiness and increase it. If they like each other, as you say they do—

*Hard.* *If*, man! I tell you they *do* like each other. My daughter as good as told me so.

*Sir Charles.* But girls are apt to flatter themselves, you know.

*Hard.* I saw him grasp her hand in the warmest manner myself; and here he comes to put you out of your *ifs*, I warrant him.

*Enter* MARLOW

*Marl.* I come, sir, once more, to ask pardon for my strange conduct. I can scarce reflect on my insolence without confusion.

*Hard.* Tut, boy, a trifle. You take it too gravely. An hour or two's laughing with my daughter will set all to rights again. She'll never like you the worse for it.

*Marl.* Sir, I shall be always proud of her approbation.

*Hard.* Approbation is but a cold word, Mr. Marlow; if I am not deceived, you have something more than approbation thereabouts. You take me!

*Marl.* Really, sir, I have not that happiness.

*Hard.* Come, boy, I'm an old fellow, and know what's what as well as you that are younger. I know what has past between you; but mum.

*Marl.* Sure, sir, nothing has past between us but the most profound respect on my side, and the most distant reserve on hers. You don't think, sir, that my impudence has been past upon all the rest of the family?

*Hard.* Impudence! No, I don't say that—not quite impudence—though girls like to be played with, and rumpled a little, too, sometimes. But she has told no tales, I assure you.

*Marl.* I never gave her the slightest cause.

*Hard.* Well, well, I like modesty in its place well enough. But this is overacting, young gentleman. You *may* be open. Your father and I will like you the better for it.

*Marl.* May I die, sir, if I ever—

*Hard.* I tell you she don't dislike you; and as I'm sure you like her—

*Marl.* Dear sir—I protest, sir—

*Hard.* I see no reason why you should not be joined as fast as the parson can tie you.

*Marl.* But hear me, sir—

*Hard.* Your father approves the match, I admire it; every moment's delay will be doing mischief, so—

*Marl.* But why won't you hear me? By all that's just and true, I never gave Miss Hardcastle the slightest mark of my attachment, or even the most distant hint to suspect me of affection. We had but one interview, and that was formal, modest, and uninteresting.

*Hard.* [*aside*]. This fellow's formal, modest impudence is beyond bearing.

*Sir Charles.* And you never grasped her hand, or made any protestations?

*Marl.* As Heaven is my witness, I came down in obedience to your commands. I saw the lady without emotion, and parted without reluctance. I hope you'll exact no further proofs of my duty, nor prevent me from leaving a house in which I suffer so many mortifications. [*Exit*

*Sir Charles.* I'm astonished at the air of sincerity with which he parted.

*Hard.* And I'm astonished at the deliberate intrepidity of his assurance.

*Sir Charles.* I dare pledge my life and honour upon his truth.

*Hard.* Here comes my daughter, and I would stake my happiness upon her veracity.

*Enter* Miss Hardcastle

*Hard.* Kate, come hither, child. Answer us sincerely, and without reserve: has Mr. Marlow made you any professions of love and affection?

*Miss Hard.* The question is very abrupt, sir! But since you require unreserved sincerity, I think he has.

*Hard.* [*to* Sir Charles]. You see.

*Sir Charles.* And pray, madam, have you and my son had more than one interview?

*Miss Hard.* Yes, sir, several.

*Hard.* [*to* Sir Charles]. You see.

*Sir Charles.* But did he profess any attachment?

*Miss Hard.* A lasting one.

*Sir Charles.* Did he talk of love?

*Miss Hard.* Much, sir.

*Sir Charles.* Amazing! And all this formally?

*Miss Hard.* Formally.

*Hard.* Now, my friend, I hope you are satisfied.

*Sir Charles.* And how did he behave, madam?

*Miss Hard.* As most professed admirers do: said some civil things of my face, talked much of his want of merit, and the greatness of mine; mentioned his heart, gave a short tragedy speech, and ended with pretended rapture.

*Sir Charles.* Now I'm perfectly convinced, indeed. I know his conversation among women to be modest and submissive. This forward, canting, ranting manner by no means describes him; and, I am confident, he never sat for the picture.

*Miss Hard.* Then what, sir, if I should convince you to your face of my sincerity? If you and my papa, in about half an hour, will place yourselves behind that screen, you shall hear him declare his passion to me in person.

*Sir Charles.* Agreed. And if I find him what you describe, all my happiness in him must have an end. [*Exit*

*Miss Hard.* And if you don't find him what I describe—I fear my happiness must never have a beginning. [*Exeunt*

### SCENE II

*The Back of the Garden*

*Enter* HASTINGS

*Hast.* What an idiot am I, to wait here for a fellow who probably takes a delight in mortifying me. He never intended to be punctual, and I'll wait no longer. What do I see? It is he! and perhaps with news of my Constance.

*Enter* TONY, *booted and spattered*

*Hast.* My honest 'Squire! I now find you a man of your word. This looks like friendship.

*Tony.* Ay, I'm your friend, and the best friend you have in the world, if you knew but all. This riding by night, by the bye, is cursedly tiresome. It has shook me worse than the basket of a stage-coach.

*Hast.* But how? Where did you leave your fellow-travellers? Are they in safety? Are they housed?

*Tony.* Five-and-twenty miles in two hours and a half is no such bad driving. The poor beasts have smoked for it: rabbet[1] me, but I'd rather ride forty miles after a fox, than ten with such varment.

*Hast.* Well, but where have you left the ladies? I die with impatience.

*Tony.* Left them? Why, where should I leave them but where I found them?

*Hast.* This is a riddle.

*Tony.* Riddle me this, then. What's that goes round the house, and round the house, and never touches the house?

*Hast.* I'm still astray.

*Tony.* Why, that's it, mon. I have led them astray. By jingo, there's ~~not~~ a pond ~~or a~~ slough within five miles of the place but they can tell the taste of.

*Hast.* Ha! ha! ha! I understand: you took them in a round while they supposed themselves going forward, and so you have at last brought them home again.

*Tony.* You shall hear. I first took them down Feather-bed Lane, where we stuck fast in the mud. I then rattled them crack over the stones of Up-and-down Hill. I then introduced them to the gibbet on Heavy-tree Heath; and from that, with a circumbendibus,[2] I fairly lodged them in the horse-pond at the bottom of the garden.

*Hast.* But no accident, I hope?

*Tony.* No, no. Only mother is confoundedly frightened. She thinks herself forty miles off. She's sick of the journey; and the cattle can scarce crawl. So, if your own horses be ready, you may whip off with cousin, and I'll be bound that no soul here can budge a foot to follow you.

*Hast.* My dear friend, how can I be grateful?

*Tony.* Ay, now it's "dear friend," "noble 'Squire." Just now, it was all "idiot," "cub," and run me through the guts. Damn *your* way of fighting, I say. After we take a knock in this part of the country, we kiss and be friends. But if you had run me through the guts, then I should be dead, and you might go kiss the hangman.

*Hast.* The rebuke is just. But I must hasten to relieve Miss Neville: if you keep the old lady employed, I promise to take care of the young one.

*Tony.* Never fear me. Here she comes; vanish. [*Exit* HASTINGS.] She's got from the pond, and draggled up to the waist like a mermaid.

*Enter* MRS. HARDCASTLE

*Mrs. Hard.* Oh, Tony, I'm killed. Shook! Battered to death! I shall never survive it. That last jolt, that laid us against the quickset-hedge,[3] has done my business.

*Tony.* Alack, mamma, it was all your own fault. You would be for running away by night, without knowing one inch of the way.

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[1] rabbet: humble.

[2] circumbendibus: *humorous for* a roundabout course.

[3] quickset-hedge: hawthorn hedge.

*Mrs. Hard.* I wish we were at home again. I never met so many accidents in so short a journey. Drenched in the mud, overturned in a ditch, stuck fast in a slough, jolted to a jelly, and at last to lose our way! Whereabouts do you think we are, Tony?

*Tony.* By my guess, we should be upon Crack-skull Common, about forty miles from home.

*Mrs. Hard.* O lud! O lud! The most notorious spot in all the country. We only want a robbery to make a complete night on't.

*Tony.* Don't be afraid, mamma, don't be afraid. Two of the five that kept here are hanged, and the other three may not find us. Don't be afraid.—Is that a man that's galloping behind us? No; it's only a tree.—Don't be afraid.

*Mrs. Hard.* The fright will certainly kill me.

*Tony.* Do you see anything like a black hat moving behind the thicket?

*Mrs. Hard.* Oh, death!

*Tony.* No; it's only a cow. Don't be afraid, mamma, don't be afraid.

*Mrs. Hard.* As I'm alive, Tony, I see a man coming toward us. Ah, I am sure on't. If he perceives us, we are undone.

*Tony* [*aside*]. Father-in-law, by all that's unlucky come to take one of his night walks. [*To her.*] Ah, it's a highwayman, with pistols as long as my arm. A damned ill-looking fellow!

*Mrs. Hard.* Good Heaven, defend us! He approaches.

*Tony.* Do you hide yourself in that thicket, and leave me to manage him. If there be any danger, I'll cough, and cry hem. When I cough, be sure to keep close. [MRS. HARDCASTLE *hides behind a tree in the back scene.*]

*Enter* HARDCASTLE

*Hard.* I'm mistaken, or I heard voices of people in want of help. Oh, Tony, is that you? I did not expect you so soon back. Are your mother and her charge in safety?

*Tony.* Very safe, sir, at my aunt Pedigree's. Hem.

*Mrs. Hard.* [*from behind*]. Ah, death! I find there's danger.

*Hard.* Forty miles in three hours; sure that's too much, my youngster.

*Tony.* Stout horses and willing minds make short journeys, as they say. Hem.

*Mrs. Hard.* [*from behind*]. Sure, he'll do the dear boy no harm.

*Hard.* But I heard a voice here; I should be glad to know from whence it came.

*Tony.* It was I, sir, talking to myself, sir. I was saying that forty miles in four hours was very good going. Hem. As to be sure it was. Hem. I have got a sort of cold by being out in the air. We'll go in, if you please. Hem.

*Hard.* But if you talked to yourself, you did not answer yourself. I'm certain I heard two voices, and am resolved [*raising his voice*] to find the other out.

*Mrs. Hard.* [*from behind*]. Oh! he's coming to find me out. Oh!

*Tony.* What need you go, sir, if I tell you? Hem. I'll lay down my life for the truth—hem—I'll tell you all, sir. [*Detaining him.*]

*Hard.* I tell you I will not be detained. I insist on seeing. It's in vain to expect I'll believe you.

*Mrs. Hard.* [*running forward from behind*]. O lud! he'll murder my poor boy, my darling! Here, good gentleman, whet your rage upon me. Take my money, my life, but spare that young gentleman; spare my child, if you have any mercy.

*Hard.* My wife, as I'm a Christian. From whence can she come? or what does she mean?

*Mrs. Hard.* [*kneeling*]. Take compassion on us, good Mr. Highwayman. Take our money, our watches, all we have, but spare our lives. We will never bring you to justice; indeed we won't, good Mr. Highwayman.

*Hard.* I believe the woman's out of her senses. What, Dorothy, don't you know *me?*

*Mrs. Hard.* Mr. Hardcastle, as I'm alive! My fears blinded me. But who, my dear, could have expected to meet you here, in this frightful place, so far from home? What has brought you to follow us?

*Hard.* Sure, Dorothy, you have not lost your wits? So far from home, when you are within forty yards of your own door! [*To him.*] This is one of your old tricks, you graceless rogue, you! [*To her.*] Don't you know the gate and the mulberry tree; and don't you remember the horse-pond, my dear?

*Mrs. Hard.* Yes, I shall remember the horse-pond as long as I live; I have caught my death in it. [*To* Tony.] And is it to you, you graceless varlet, I owe all this? I'll teach you to abuse your mother, I will.

*Tony.* Ecod, mother, all the parish says you have spoiled me, and so you may take the fruits on't.

*Mrs. Hard.* I'll spoil you, I will.

[*Follows him off the stage*

*Hard.* There's morality, however, in his reply. [*Exit*

*Enter* Hastings *and* Miss Neville

*Hast.* My dear Constance, why will you deliberate thus? If we delay a moment, all is lost forever. Pluck up a little resolution, and we shall soon be out of the reach of her malignity.

*Miss Nev.* I find it impossible. My spirits are so sunk with the agitations I have suffered, that I am unable to face any new danger. Two or three years' patience will at last crown us with happiness.

*Hast.* Such a tedious delay is worse than inconstancy. Let us fly, my charmer. Let us date our happiness from this very moment. Perish fortune. Love and content will increase what we possess beyond a monarch's revenue. Let me prevail!

*Miss Nev.* No, Mr. Hastings, no. Prudence once more comes to my relief, and I will obey its dictates. In the moment of passion, fortune may be despised, but it ever produces a lasting repentance. I'm resolved to apply to Mr. Hardcastle's compassion and justice for redress.

*Hast.* But though he had the will, he has not the power to relieve you.

*Miss Nev.* But he has influence, and upon that I am resolved to rely.

*Hast.* I have no hopes. But, since you persist, I must reluctantly obey you. [*Exeunt*

### Scene III

*Changes: Room at Mr. Hardcastle's*

*Enter* Sir Charles Marlow *and* Miss Hardcastle

*Sir Charles.* What a situation am I in! If what you say appears, I shall then find a guilty son. If what he says be true, I shall then lose one that, of all others, I most wished for a daughter.

*Miss Hard.* I am proud of your approbation; and to show I merit it, if you place yourselves as I directed, you shall hear his explicit declaration. But he comes.

*Sir Charles.* I'll to your father, and keep him to the appointment.

[*Exit* Sir Charles

*Enter* Marlow

*Marl.* Though prepared for setting out, I come once more to take leave; nor did I, till this moment, know the pain I feel in the separation.

*Miss Hard.* [*in her own natural manner*]. I believe these sufferings cannot be very great, sir, which you can so easily remove. A day or two longer, perhaps, might lessen your uneasiness, by showing the little value of what you now think proper to regret.

*Marl.* [*aside*]. This girl every moment improves upon me. [*To her.*] It must not be, madam; I have already trifled too long with my heart. My very pride begins to submit to my passion. The disparity of education and fortune, the anger of a parent, and the contempt of my equals begin to lose their weight; and nothing can restore me to myself but this painful effort of resolution.

*Miss Hard.* Then go, sir: I'll urge nothing more to detain you. Though my family be as good as hers you came down to visit, and my education, I hope, not inferior, what are these advantages without equal affluence? I must remain contented with the slight approbation of imputed merit; I must have only the mockery of your addresses, while all your serious aims are fixed on fortune.

*Enter* Hardcastle *and* Sir Charles Marlow *from behind*

*Sir Charles.* Here, behind this screen.

*Hard.* Ay, ay; make no noise. I'll engage my Kate covers him with confusion at last.

*Marl.* By heavens, madam, fortune was ever my smallest consideration. Your beauty at first caught my eye; for who could see that without emotion? But every moment that I converse with you steals in some new grace, heightens the picture, and gives it stronger expression. What at first seemed rustic plainness, now appears refined simplicity. What seemed forward assurance, now strikes me as the result of courageous innocence and conscious virtue.

*Sir Charles.* What can it mean? He amazes me!

*Hard.* I told you how it would be. Hush!

*Marl.* I am now determined to stay, madam, and I have too good an opinion of my father's discernment, when he sees you, to doubt his approbation.

*Miss Hard.* No, Mr. Marlow, I will not, cannot detain you. Do you think I could suffer a connexion in which there is the smallest room for repentance? Do you think I would take the mean advantage of a transient passion to load you with confusion? Do you think I could ever relish that happiness which was acquired by lessening yours?

*Marl.* By all that's good, I can have no happiness but what's in your power to grant me! Nor shall I ever feel repentance but in not having seen your merits before. I will stay even contrary to your wishes; and though you should persist to shun me, I will make my respectful assiduities atone for the levity of my past conduct.

*Miss Hard.* Sir, I must entreat you'll desist. As our acquaintance began, so let it end, in indifference. I might have given an hour or two to levity; but seriously, Mr. Marlow, do you think I could ever submit to a connexion where I must appear mercenary, and *you* imprudent. Do you think I could ever catch at the confident addresses of a secure admirer?

*Marl.* [*kneeling*]. Does this look like security! Does this look like confidence? No, madam, every moment that shows me your merit, only serves to increase my diffidence and confusion. Here let me continue—

*Sir Charles.* I can hold it no longer. Charles, Charles, how hast thou deceived me! Is this your indifference, your uninteresting conversation?

*Hard.* Your cold contempt: your formal interview! What have you to say now?

*Marl.* That I'm all amazement! What can it mean?

*Hard.* It means that you can say and unsay things at pleasure; that you can address a lady in private, and deny it in public; that you have one story for us, and another for my daughter.

*Marl.* Daughter!—This lady your daughter?

*Hard.* Yes, sir, my only daughter; my Kate; whose else should she be?

*Marl.* Oh, the devil!

*Miss Hard.* Yes, sir, that very identical tall, squinting lady you were pleased to take me for [*curtesying.*]; she that you addressed as the mild, modest, sentimental man of gravity, and the bold, forward, agreeable Rattle of the Ladies Club. Ha! ha! ha!

*Marl.* Zounds, there's no bearing this; it's worse than death!

*Miss Hard.* In which of your characters, sir, will you give us leave to address you? As the faltering gentleman, with looks on the ground, that speaks just to be heard, and hates hypocrisy; or the loud, confident creature, that keeps it up with Mrs. Mantrap, and old Miss Biddy Buckskin, till three in the morning!—Ha! ha! ha!

*Marl.* O, curse on my noisy head. I never attempted to be impudent yet that I was not taken down. I must be gone.

*Hard.* By the hand of my body, but you shall not. I see it was all a mistake, and I am rejoiced to find it. You shall not, sir, I tell you. I know she'll forgive you. Won't you forgive him, Kate? We'll all forgive you. Take courage, man. [*They retire, she tormenting him, to the back scene.*]

*Enter* Mrs. Hardcastle *and* Tony

*Mrs. Hard.* So, so they're gone off. Let them go, I care not.

*Hard.* Who gone?

*Mrs. Hard.* My dutiful niece and her gentleman, Mr. Hastings, from town. He who came down with our modest visitor here.

*Sir Charles.* Who, my honest George Hastings? As worthy a fellow as lives, and the girl could not have made a more prudent choice.

*Hard.* Then, by the hand of my body, I'm proud of the connexion.

*Mrs. Hard.* Well, if he has taken away the lady, he has not taken her fortune; that remains in this family to console us for her loss.

*Hard.* Sure, Dorothy, you would not be so mercenary?

*Mrs. Hard.* Ay, that's my affair, not yours.

*Hard.* But, you know, if your son, when of age, refuses to marry his cousin, her whole fortune is then at her own disposal.

*Mrs. Hard.* Ay, but he's not of age, and she has not thought proper to wait for his refusal.

*Enter* Hastings *and* Miss Neville

*Mrs. Hard.* [*aside*]. What, returned so soon! I begin not to like it.

*Hast.* [*to* Hardcastle]. For my late attempt to fly off with your niece, let my present confusion be my punishment. We are now come back, to appeal from your justice to your humanity. By her father's consent, I first paid her my addresses, and our passions were first founded in duty.

*Miss. Nev.* Since his death, I have been obliged to stoop to dissimulation to avoid oppression. In an hour of levity, I was ready even to give up my fortune to secure my choice. But I am now recovered from the delusion, and hope from your tenderness what is denied me from a nearer connexion.

*Mrs. Hard.* Pshaw, pshaw, this is all but the whining end of a modern novel!

*Hard.* Be it what it will, I'm glad they're come back to reclaim their due. Come hither, Tony, boy. Do you refuse this lady's hand whom I now offer you?

*Tony.* What signifies my refusing? You know I can't refuse her till I'm of age, father.

*Hard.* While I thought concealing your age, boy, was likely to conduce to your improvement, I concurred with your mother's desire to keep it secret. But since I find she turns it to a wrong use, I must now declare you have been of age these three months.

*Tony.* Of age! Am I of age, father?

*Hard.* Above three months.

*Tony.* Then you'll see the first use I'll make of my liberty. [*Taking* Miss Neville's *hand.*] Witness all men, by these presents, that I, Anthony Lumpkin, Esquire, of blank place, refuse you, Constantia Neville, spinster, of no place at all, for my true and lawful wife. So Constance Neville may marry whom she pleases, and Tony Lumpkin is his own man again.

*Sir Charles.* O brave 'Squire!

*Hast.* My worthy friend!

*Mrs. Hard.* My undutiful offspring!

*Marl.* Joy, my dear George, I give you joy sincerely. And could I prevail upon my little tyrant here to be less arbitrary, I should be the happiest man alive, if you would return me the favour.

*Hast.* [*to* Miss Hardcastle]. Come, madam, you are now driven to the very last scene of all your contrivances. I know you like him, I'm sure he loves you, and you must and shall have him.

*Hard.* [*joining their hands*]. And I say so too. And, Mr. Marlow, if she makes as good a wife as she has a daughter, I don't believe you'll ever repent your bargain. So now to supper. To-morrow we shall gather all the poor of the parish about us, and the mistakes of the night shall be crowned with a merry morning. So, boy, take her; and as you have been mistaken in the mistress, my wish is, that you may never be mistaken in the wife. [*Exeunt* Omnes

## EPILOGUE

BY DR. GOLDSMITH, SPOKEN BY MRS. BULKLEY IN THE CHARACTER OF MISS HARDCASTLE

WELL, having stoop'd to conquer with success,
And gain'd a husband without aid from dress,
Still as a bar-maid, I could wish it too,
As I have conquer'd him to conquer you:
And let me say, for all your resolution,
That pretty bar-maids have done execution.
Our life is all a play, composed to please;
"We have our exits and our entrances."
The first act shows the simple country maid,
Harmless and young, of everything afraid;
Blushes when hired, and with unmeaning action,
"I hopes as how to give you satisfaction."
Her second act displays a livelier scene,—
Th' unblushing bar-maid of a country inn,
Who whisks about the house, at market caters,
Talks loud, coquets the guests, and scolds the waiters.
Next the scene shifts to town, and there she soars,
The chop-house toast of ogling *connoisseurs;*
On 'squires and cits she there displays her arts,
And on the gridiron broils her lovers' hearts;
And, as she smiles, her triumphs to complete,
E'en common-councilmen forget to eat.
The fourth act shows her wedded to the 'squire,
And madam now begins to hold it higher;
Pretends to taste, at operas cries *caro*,
And quits her Nancy Dawson[1] for Che Faro:[2]
Doats upon dancing, and in all her pride,
Swims round the room, the Heinel[3] of Cheapside:
Ogles and leers with artificial skill,
Till having lost in age the power to kill,
She sits all night at cards, and ogles at spadille.[4]
Such, through our lives, th' eventful history—
The fifth and last act still remains for me.
The bar-maid now for your protection prays,
Turns female barrister, and pleads for Bayes.[5]

## SHERIDAN

With Goldsmith's contemporary **Richard Brinsley Sheridan** (1751–1816) the history of English drama crosses the nineteenth century line. Sheridan, like Goldsmith a brilliant Irishman, was equally famous in his own day as a dramatist and as a Parliamentary orator. He was born in Dublin of a distinguished family, his father an actor and his mother a writer of plays; but he was educated in England. After a very romantic love affair and marriage, some incidents of which may have furnished him with suggestions for *The Rivals*, he turned playwright with great success. When David Garrick retired, Sheridan bought his half share in Drury Lane Theatre, and before he was twenty-five years old had become sole owner. At twenty-nine he entered Parliament; and for thirty years divided his time between writing and producing plays, and delivering brilliant speeches in the House. Like Burke, Pitt, and Fox, he took the side of the colonies in the War of Independence; but his most famous speeches were made in the trial of Warren Hastings. The latter years of his life were unhappy: his wife died; Drury Lane Theatre burnt down; and the cost of reërecting it, together with other debts, ruined him. He failed of reëlection to Parliament, was even arrested for debt, and died in unhappiness and poverty. To make up for their neglect his contemporaries buried him in Westminster Abbey with much pomp, dukes and earls being his pallbearers.

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[1] **Nancy Dawson:** a popular song.

[2] **Che Faro:** from Glück's opera of *Orfeo*, 1764: "Che faro senza Euridice."

[3] **Heinel:** a famous Prussian dancer.

[4] **spadille:** the chief trump card in the popular card game of ombre.

[5] **Bayes:** The name given Dryden in *The Rehearsal.* Here it means laurels.

Like Goldsmith Sheridan attacked the vogue of sentimentality. His best plays, *The Rivals* (1775) and, especially, *The School for Scandal* (1777), are the highest type of the comedy of manners in English. Being products of an age before the new ideas of "liberty, fraternity, and equality" had awakened the conscience of Europe to a sense of responsibility for the welfare of the common folk of the world, these comedies are society, not social, dramas. They present a section of life with which Sheridan and his fashionable audiences were entirely familiar,—the sophisticated and selfish, yet brilliant society of Bath and London. Never for a moment is the witty satire marred by a touch of present-day seriousness: there is no hint of a philanthropic aim to reform and uplift. Sheridan's comedies are amusing pictures of his frivolous contemporaries, written in scintillating dialogue, and with a sure sense of dramatic situation. In form they carry on the type created by Molière.

Other comedies by Sheridan, popular in his own day and still enjoyable, are: *St. Patrick's Day, or The Scheming Lieutenant* (1775), a two-act farce; *The Duenna, or The Double Elopement* (1775), a comic opera; *The Critic, or A Tragedy Rehearsed* (1779), a satiric farce.

About this time interest in Shakespeare revived, chiefly through the productions of his plays by **David Garrick** (1717–1779); and this was carried over into the nineteenth century by the acting of Sarah Siddons, her brother, John Philip Kemble, and the tragedian, Edmund Kean.

Meanwhile the spirit of romanticism had begun to influence the drama; and soon a new freedom was to overthrow the artificial formality which had been so securely established in the theatre at the beginning of the eighteenth century.

## THE SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL

Richard Brinsley Sheridan

*Produced at Drury Lane Theatre, London, on May 8, 1777*

### DRAMATIS PERSONAE

Sir Peter Teazle
Sir Oliver Surface
Joseph Surface
Charles Surface
Crabtree
Sir Benjamin Backbite
Rowley
Moses
Trip

Snake
Careless
Sir Harry Bumper

Lady Teazle
Maria
Lady Sneerwell
Mrs. Candour

Gentlemen, Maid, and Servants

Scene: *London*

### A PORTRAIT

ADDRESSED TO MRS. CREWE,[1] WITH THE COMEDY OF THE SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL

Tell me, ye prim adepts in Scandal's school,
Who rail by precept, and detract by rule,
Lives there no character, so tried, so known,
So decked with grace, and so unlike your own,
That even you assist her fame to raise,
Approve by envy, and by silence praise!
Attend!—a model shall attract your view—
Daughters of calumny, I summon you!

---

[1] Mrs. Crewe: a famous beauty.

You shall decide if this a portrait prove,
Or fond creation of the Muse and Love:
Attend, ye virgin critics, shrewd and sage,
Ye matron censors of this childish age,
Whose peering eye and wrinkled front declare
A fixed antipathy to young and fair;
By cunning, cautious; or by nature, cold,
In maiden madness, virulently bold!—
Attend, ye skilled to coin the precious tale,
Creating proof, where inuendos fail!
Whose practised memories, cruelly exact,
Omit no circumstance, except the fact!—
Attend, all ye who boast,—or old or young,—
The living libel of a slanderous tongue!
So shall my theme as far contrasted be,
As saints by fiends, or hymns by calumny.
Come, gentle Amoret[1] (for 'neath that name
In worthier verse is sung thy beauty's fame);
Come—for but thee who seeks the Muse? and while
Celestial blushes check thy conscious smile,
With timid grace, and hesitating eye,
The perfect model, which I boast, supply:—
Vain Muse! couldst thou the humblest sketch create
Of her, or slightest charm couldst imitate—
Could thy blest strain in kindred colours trace
The faintest wonder of her form and face—
Poets would study the immortal line,
And Reynolds[2] own his art subdued by thine;
That art, which well might added lustre give
To Nature's best, and Heaven's superlative:
On Granby's[3] cheek might bid new glories rise,
Or point a purer beam from Devon's[4] eyes!
Hard is the task to shape that beauty's praise,
Whose judgment scorns the homage flattery pays!
But praising Amoret we cannot err,
No tongue o'ervalues Heaven, or flatters her!
Yet she by Fate's perverseness—she alone
Would doubt our truth, nor deem such praise her own.
Adorning fashion, unadorned by dress,
Simple from taste, and not from carelessness;
Discreet in gesture, in deportment mild,
Not stiff with prudence, nor uncouthly wild:
No state has Amoret; no studied mien;
She frowns no goddess, and she moves no queen.
The softer charm that in her manner lies
Is framed to captivate, yet not surprise;
It justly suits the expression of her face,—
'Tis less than dignity, and more than grace!
On her pure cheek the native hue is such,
That, formed by Heaven to be admired so much,
The hand divine, with a less partial care,
Might well have fixed a fainter crimson there,
And bade the gentle inmate of her breast—
Inshrinèd Modesty—supply the rest.
But who the peril of her lips shall paint?
Strip them of smiles—still, still all words are faint.
But moving Love himself appears to teach
Their action, though denied to rule her speech;
And thou who seest her speak, and dost not hear,
Mourn not her distant accents 'scape thine ear;
Viewing those lips, thou still may'st make pretence
To judge of what she says, and swear 'tis sense:

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[1] **Amoret:** Mrs. Crewe: In *The Faerie Queene*, Amoret is the impersonation of beauty (Book III).

[2] **Reynolds:** Sir Joshua Reynolds, the celebrated portrait painter.

[3] **Granby:** the Marchioness of Granby, another famous beauty.

[4] **Devon:** the Duchess of Devonshire, a rival beauty.

Clothed with such grace, with such expression fraught,
They move in meaning, and they pause in thought!
But dost thou farther watch, with charmed surprise,
The mild irresolution of her eyes,
Curious to mark how frequent they repose,
In brief eclipse and momentary close—
Ah! seest thou not an ambushed Cupid there.
Too timorous of his charge, with jealous care
Veils and unveils those beams of heavenly light,
Too full, too fatal else, for mortal sight?
Nor yet, such pleasing vengeance fond to meet,
In pardoning dimples hope a safe retreat.
What though her peaceful breast should ne'er allow
Subduing frowns to arm her altered brow,
By Love, I swear, and by his gentle wiles,
More fatal still the mercy of her smiles!
Thus lovely, thus adorned, possessing all
Of bright or fair that can to woman fall,
The height of vanity might well be thought
Prerogative in her, and Nature's fault.
Yet gentle Amoret, in mind supreme
As well as charms, rejects the vainer theme;
And, half mistrustful of her beauty's store,
She barbs with wit those darts too keen before:—
Read in all knowledge that her sex should reach,
Though Greville,[1] or the Muse, should deign to teach
Fond to improve, nor timorous to discern
How far it is a woman's grace to learn;
In Millar's[2] dialect she would not prove
Apollo's priestess, but Apollo's love,
Graced by those signs which truth delights to own,
The timid blush, and mild submitted tone:
Whate'er she says, though sense appear throughout,
Displays the tender hue of female doubt;
Decked with that charm, how lovely wit appears,
How graceful science, when that robe she wears!
Such too her talents, and her bent of mind,
As speak a sprightly heart by thought refined:
A taste for mirth, by contemplation schooled,
A turn for ridicule, by candour ruled,
A scorn of folly, which she tries to hide;
An awe of talent, which she owns with pride!
  Peace, idle Muse! no more thy strain prolong,
But yield a theme, thy warmest praises wrong;
Just to her merit, though thou canst not raise
Thy feeble verse, behold th' acknowledged praise
Has spread conviction through the envious train,
And cast a fatal gloom o'er Scandal's reign!
And lo! each pallid hag, with blistered tongue,
Mutters assent to all thy zeal has sung—
Owns all the colours just—the outline true;
Thee my inspirer, and my model—Crewe!

## PROLOGUE

WRITTEN BY MR. GARRICK

A School for Scandal! tell me, I beseech you,
Needs there a school this modish art to teach you?
No need of lessons now, the knowing think;
We might as well be taught to eat and drink.
Caused by a dearth of scandal, should the vapours[3]
Distress our fair ones—let them read the papers;

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[1] Greville: Mrs. Greville, mother of Mrs. Crewe.
[2] Millar: Lady Miller.
[3] vapours: "the blues."

Their powerful mixtures such disorders hit;
Crave what you will—there's *quantum sufficit.*[1]
"Lord!" cries my Lady Wormwood (who loves tattle,
And puts much salt and pepper in her prattle),
Just risen at noon, all night at cards when threshing
Strong tea and scandal—"Bless me, how refreshing!
Give me the papers, Lisp—how bold and free! [*Sips.*]
*Last night Lord L.* [*Sips.*] *was caught with Lady D.*
For aching heads what charming sal volatile! [*Sips.*]
*If Mrs. B. will still continue flirting,*
*We hope she'll* DRAW, *or we'll* UNDRAW *the curtain.*
Fine satire, poz[2]—in public all abuse it,
But, by ourselves [*Sips.*], our praise we can't refuse it.
Now, Lisp, read you—there, at that dash and star:"
"Yes, ma'am—*A certain lord had best beware,*
*Who lives not twenty miles from Grosvenor Square;*[3]
*For, should he Lady W. find willing,*
*Wormwood is bitter*"——"Oh! that's me! the villain!
Throw it behind the fire, and never more
Let that vile paper come within my door."
Thus at our friends we laugh, who feel the dart;
To reach our feelings, we ourselves must smart.
Is our young bard so young, to think that he
Can stop the full spring-tide of calumny?
Knows he the world so little, and its trade?
Alas! the devil's sooner raised than laid.
So strong, so swift, the monster there's no gagging:
Cut Scandal's head off, still the tongue is wagging.
Proud of your smiles once lavishly bestowed,
Again our young Don Quixote[4] takes the road:
To show his gratitude he draws his pen,
And seeks this hydra, Scandal, in his den.
For your applause all perils he would through—
He'll fight—that's write—a cavalliero true,
Till every drop of blood—that's ink—is spilt for you.

## ACT I

### SCENE I

*Lady Sneerwell's Dressing-Room*

LADY SNEERWELL *discovered at her toilet;* SNAKE *drinking chocolate*

*Lady Sneerwell.* The paragraphs, you say, Mr. Snake, were all inserted?

*Snake.* They were, madam; and, as I copied them myself in a feigned hand, there can be no suspicion whence they came.

*Lady Sneer.* Did you circulate the report of Lady Brittle's intrigue with Captain Boastall?

*Snake.* That's in as fine a train as your ladyship could wish. In the common course of things, I think it must reach Mrs. Clackitt's ears within four-and-twenty hours; and then, you know, the business is as good as done.

*Lady Sneer.* Why, truly, Mrs. Clackitt has a very pretty talent, and a great deal of industry.

*Snake.* True, madam, and has been tolerably successful in her day. To my knowledge, she has been the cause of six matches being broken off, and three sons being disinherited; of four forced elopements, nine separate maintenances, and two divorces. Nay, I have more than once traced her causing a *tête-à-tête* in the "Town and Country Magazine," when the parties, perhaps, had never seen each other's face before in the course of their lives.

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[1] **quantum sufficit:** as much as is sufficient.

[2] **poz:** slang for positively.

[3] **Grosvenor Square:** fashionable residential district.

[4] **Don Quixote:** Sheridan, who attacks scandal.

*Lady Sneer.* She certainly has talents, but her manner is gross.

*Snake.* 'Tis very true. She generally designs well, has a free tongue and a bold invention; but her colouring is too dark, and her outlines often extravagant. She wants that delicacy of tint, and mellowness of sneer, which distinguish your ladyship's scandal.

*Lady Sneer.* You are partial, Snake.

*Snake.* Not in the least; every body allows that Lady Sneerwell can do more with a word or look than many can with the most laboured detail, even when they happen to have a little truth on their side to support it.

*Lady Sneer.* Yes, my dear Snake; and I am no hypocrite to deny the satisfaction I reap from the success of my efforts. Wounded myself, in the early part of my life, by the envenomed tongue of slander, I confess I have since known no pleasure equal to the reducing others to the level of my own reputation.

*Snake.* Nothing can be more natural. But, Lady Sneerwell, there is one affair in which you have lately employed me, wherein, I confess, I am at a loss to guess your motives.

*Lady Sneer.* I conceive you mean with respect to my neighbour, Sir Peter Teazle, and his family?

*Snake.* I do. Here are two young men, to whom Sir Peter has acted as a kind of guardian since their father's death; the eldest possessing the most amiable character, and universally well spoken of;—the youngest, the most dissipated and extravagant young fellow in the kingdom, without friends or character: the former an avowed admirer of your ladyship, and apparently your favourite; the latter attached to Maria, Sir Peter's ward, and confessedly beloved by her. Now, on the face of these circumstances, it is utterly unaccountable to me, why you, the widow of a city knight, with a good jointure, should not close with[1] the passion of a man of such character and expectations as Mr. Surface; and more so why you should be so uncommonly earnest to destroy the mutual attachment subsisting between his brother Charles and Maria.

*Lady Sneer.* Then, at once to unravel this mystery I must inform you that love has no share whatever in the intercourse between Mr. Surface and me.

*Snake.* No!

*Lady Sneer.* His real attachment is to Maria, or her fortune; but, finding in his brother a favoured rival, he has been obliged to mask his pretensions, and profit by my assistance.

*Snake.* Yet still I am more puzzled why you should interest yourself in his success.

*Lady Sneer.* Heavens! how dull you are! Cannot you surmise the weakness which I hitherto, through shame, have concealed even from you? Must I confess that Charles—that extravagant, that bankrupt in fortune and reputation—that he it is for whom I am thus anxious and malicious, and to gain whom I would sacrifice every thing?

*Snake.* Now, indeed, your conduct appears consistent: but how came you and Mr. Surface so confidential?

*Lady Sneer.* For our mutual interest. I have found him out a long time since. I know him to be artful, selfish, and malicious—in short, a sentimental knave; while with Sir Peter, and indeed with all his acquaintance, he passes for a youthful miracle of prudence, good sense, and benevolence.

*Snake.* Yes; yet Sir Peter vows he has not his equal in England; and, above all, he praises him as a man of sentiment.

*Lady Sneer.* True; and with the assistance of his sentiment and hypocrisy he has brought Sir Peter entirely into his interest with regard to Maria; while poor Charles has no friend in the house—though, I fear, he has a powerful one in Maria's heart, against whom we must direct our schemes.

*Enter* SERVANT

*Servant.* Mr. Surface.

*Lady Sneer.* Show him up. [*Exit* SERVANT.] He generally calls about this time. I don't wonder at people giving him to me for a lover.

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[1] close with: accede to.

*Enter* JOSEPH SURFACE

*Joseph Surface.* My dear Lady Sneerwell, how do you do to-day? Mr. Snake, your most obedient.

*Lady Sneer.* Snake has just been rallying me on our mutual attachment, but I have informed him of our real views. You know how useful he has been to us; and, believe me, the confidence is not ill-placed.

*Jos. Surf.* Madam, it is impossible for me to suspect a man of Mr. Snake's sensibility and discernment.

*Lady Sneer.* Well, well, no compliments now; but tell me when you saw your mistress, Maria—or, what is more material to me, your brother.

*Jos. Surf.* I have not seen either since I left you; but I can inform you that they never meet. Some of your stories have taken a good effect on Maria.

*Lady Sneer.* Ah, my dear Snake! the merit of this belongs to you. But do your brother's distresses increase?

*Jos. Surf.* Every hour. I am told he has had another execution[1] in the house yesterday. In short, his dissipation and extravagance exceed any thing I have ever heard of.

*Lady Sneer.* Poor Charles!

*Jos. Surf.* True, madam; notwithstanding his vices, one can't help feeling for him. Poor Charles! I'm sure I wish it were in my power to be of any essential service to him; for the man who does not share in the distresses of a brother, even though merited by his own misconduct, deserves——

*Lady Sneer.* O Lud![2] you are going to be moral, and forget that you are among friends.

*Jos. Surf.* Egad, that's true! I'll keep that sentiment till I see Sir Peter. However, it is certainly a charity to rescue Maria from such a libertine, who if he is to be reclaimed, can be so only by a person of your ladyship's superior accomplishments and understanding.

*Snake.* I believe, Lady Sneerwell, here's company coming: I'll go and copy the letter I mentioned to you. Mr. Surface, your most obedient.

*Jos. Surf.* Sir, your very devoted.—[*Exit* SNAKE.] Lady Sneerwell, I am very sorry you have put any farther confidence in that fellow.

*Lady Sneer.* Why so?

*Jos. Surf.* I have lately detected him in frequent conference with old Rowley, who was formerly my father's steward, and has never, you know, been a friend of mine.

*Lady Sneer.* And do you think he would betray us?

*Jos. Surf.* Nothing more likely: take my word for't, Lady Sneerwell, that fellow hasn't virtue enough to be faithful even to his own villany. Ah, Maria!

*Enter* MARIA

*Lady Sneer.* Maria, my dear, how do you do? What's the matter?

*Maria.* Oh! there's that disagreeable lover of mine, Sir Benjamin Backbite, has just called at my guardian's, with his odious uncle, Crabtree; so I slipped out, and ran hither to avoid them.

*Lady Sneer.* Is that all?

*Jos. Surf.* If my brother Charles had been of the party, madam, perhaps you would not have been so much alarmed.

*Lady Sneer.* Nay, now you are severe; for I dare swear the truth of the matter is, Maria heard you were here. But, my dear, what has Sir Benjamin done, that you should avoid him so?

*Mar.* Oh, he has done nothing—but 'tis for what he has said: his conversation is a perpetual libel on all his acquaintance.

*Jos. Surf.* Ay, and the worst of it is, there is no advantage in not knowing him; for he'll abuse a stranger just as soon as his best friend: and his uncle's as bad.

*Lady Sneer.* Nay, but we should make allowance; Sir Benjamin is a wit and a poet.

*Mar.* For my part, I own, madam, wit loses its respect with me, when I see it in company with malice. What do you think, Mr. Surface?

*Jos. Surf.* Certainly, madam; to smile at the jest which plants a thorn in another's breast is to become a principal in the mischief.

---

[1] **execution**: sheriff's sale.

[2] **O Lud**: fashionable for "Oh Lord!"

*Lady Sneer.* Pshaw! there's no possibility of being witty without a little ill nature: the malice of a good thing is the barb that makes it stick. What's your opinion, Mr. Surface?

*Jos. Surf.* To be sure, madam; that conversation, where the spirit of raillery is suppressed, will ever appear tedious and insipid.

*Mar.* Well, I'll not debate how far scandal may be allowable; but in a man, I am sure, it is always contemptible. We have pride, envy, rivalship, and a thousand motives to depreciate each other; but the male slanderer must have the cowardice of a woman before he can traduce one.

*Reënter* Servant

*Serv.* Madam, Mrs. Candour is below, and, if your ladyship's at leisure, will leave her carriage.

*Lady Sneer.* Beg her to walk in.—[*Exit* Servant.] Now, Maria, here is a character to your taste; for, though Mrs. Candour is a little talkative, every body allows her to be the best natured and best sort of woman.

*Mar.* Yes, with a very gross affectation of good nature and benevolence, she does more mischief than the direct malice of old Crabtree.

*Jos. Surf.* I' faith that's true, Lady Sneerwell: whenever I hear the current running against the characters of my friends, I never think them in such danger as when Candour undertakes their defence.

*Lady Sneer.* Hush—here she is!

*Enter* Mrs. Candour

*Mrs. Candour.* My dear Lady Sneerwell, how have you been this century?—Mr. Surface, what news do you hear?—though indeed it is no matter, for I think one hears nothing else but scandal.

*Jos. Surf.* Just so, indeed, ma'am.

*Mrs. Can.* Oh, Maria! child,—what, is the whole affair off between you and Charles? His extravagance, I presume—the town talks of nothing else.

*Mar.* I am very sorry, ma'am, the town has so little to do.

*Mrs. Can.* True, true, child: but there's no stopping people's tongues. I own I was hurt to hear it, as I indeed was to learn, from the same quarter, that your guardian, Sir Peter, and Lady Teazle have not agreed lately as well as could be wished.

*Mar.* 'Tis strangely impertinent for people to busy themselves so.

*Mrs. Can.* Very true, child: but what's to be done? People will talk—there's no preventing it. Why, it was but yesterday I was told that Miss Gadabout had eloped with Sir Filigree Flirt. But, Lord! there's no minding what one hears; though, to be sure, I had this from very good authority.

*Mar.* Such reports are highly scandalous.

*Mrs. Can.* So they are, child—shameful, shameful! But the world is so censorious, no character escapes. Lord, now who would have suspected your friend, Miss Prim, of an indiscretion? Yet such is the ill nature of people, that they say her uncle stopped her last week, just as she was stepping into the York Mail[1] with her dancing-master.

*Mar.* I'll answer for't there are no grounds for that report.

*Mrs. Can.* Ah, no foundation in the world, I dare swear; no more, probably, than for the story circulated last month, of Mrs. Festino's affair with Colonel Cassino—though, to be sure, that matter was never rightly cleared up.

*Jos. Surf.* The licence of invention some people take is monstrous indeed.

*Mar.* 'Tis so; but, in my opinion, those who report such things are equally culpable.

*Mrs. Can.* To be sure they are; tale-bearers are as bad as the tale-makers—'tis an old observation, and a very true one: but what's to be done, as I said before? how will you prevent people from talking? To-day, Mrs. Clackitt assured me, Mr. and Mrs. Honeymoon were at last become mere man and wife, like the rest of their acquaintance. And at the same time Miss Tattle, who was by, affirmed that Lord Buffalo had discovered his lady at a house of no extraordinary fame; and that Sir Harry Bouquet and Tom Saunter were to measure swords on a similar provocation. But, Lord, do you think I would report these things! No, no! tale-bearers, as I said before, are just as bad as the tale-makers.

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[1] **York Mail:** mail coach to York.

*Jos. Surf.* Ah! Mrs. Candour, if every body had your forbearance and good nature!

*Mrs. Can.* I confess, Mr. Surface, I cannot bear to hear people attacked behind their backs; and when ugly circumstances come out against our acquaintance, I own I always love to think the best. By the by, I hope 'tis not true that your brother is absolutely ruined?

*Jos. Surf.* I am afraid his circumstances are very bad indeed, ma'am.

*Mrs. Can.* Ah! I heard so—but you must tell him to keep up his spirits; every body almost is in the same way: Lord Spindle, Sir Thomas Splint, Captain Quinze, and Mr. Nickit—all up, I hear, within this week; so, if Charles is undone, he'll find half his acquaintance ruined too, and that, you know, is a consolation.

*Jos. Surf.* Doubtless, ma'am—a very great one.

*Reënter* Servant

*Serv.* Mr. Crabtree and Sir Benjamin Backbite. [*Exit*

*Lady Sneer.* So, Maria, you see your lover pursues you; positively you sha'n't escape.

*Enter* Crabtree *and* Sir Benjamin Backbite

*Crabtree.* Lady Sneerwell, I kiss your hand. Mrs. Candour, I don't believe you are acquainted with my nephew, Sir Benjamin Backbite? Egad, ma'am, he has a pretty wit, and is a pretty poet too. Isn't he, Lady Sneerwell?

*Sir Benjamin.* Oh, fie, uncle!

*Crab.* Nay, egad it's true; I back him at a rebus[1] or a charade against the best rhymer in the kingdom. Has your ladyship heard the epigram he wrote last week on Lady Frizzle's feather catching fire?—Do, Benjamin, repeat it, or the charade you made last night extempore at Mrs. Drowzie's conversazione.[2] Come now; your first is the name of a fish, your second a great naval commander, and——

*Sir Ben.* Uncle, now—pr'ythee——

*Crab.* I' faith, ma'am, 'twould surprise you to hear how ready he is at all these sort of things.

*Lady Sneer.* I wonder, Sir Benjamin, you never publish any thing.

*Sir Ben.* To say truth, ma'am, 'tis very vulgar to print; and as my little productions are mostly satires and lampoons on particular people, I find they circulate more by giving copies in confidence to the friends of the parties. However, I have some love elegies, which, when favoured with this lady's smiles, I mean to give the public. [*Pointing to* Maria.]

*Crab.* [*to* Maria]. 'Fore heaven, ma'am, they'll immortalize you!—you will be handed down to posterity, like Petrarch's Laura, or Waller's Sacharissa.[3]

*Sir Ben.* [*to* Maria]. Yes, madam, I think you will like them, when you shall see them on a beautiful quarto page, where a neat rivulet of text shall meander through a meadow of margin. 'Fore Gad, they will be the most elegant things of their kind!

*Crab.* But, ladies, that's true—have you heard the news?

*Mrs. Can.* What, sir, do you mean the report of——

*Crab.* No, ma'am, that's not it.—Miss Nicely is going to be married to her own footman.

*Mrs. Can.* Impossible!

*Crab.* Ask Sir Benjamin.

*Sir Ben.* 'Tis very true, ma'am: every thing is fixed, and the wedding liveries bespoke.

*Crab.* Yes—and they do say there were pressing reasons for it.

*Lady Sneer.* Why, I have heard something of this before.

*Mrs. Can.* It can't be—and I wonder any one should believe such a story of so prudent a lady as Miss Nicely.

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[1] rebus: the cross-word puzzle craze of 1777.

[2] conversazione: a meeting for literary conversation.

[3] Sacharissa: Lady Dorothy Snyder, celebrated by the poet Edmund Waller.

*Sir Ben.* O Lud! ma'am, that's the very reason 'twas believed at once. She has always been so cautious and so reserved, that every body was sure there was some reason for it at bottom.

*Mrs. Can.* Why, to be sure, a tale of scandal is as fatal to the credit of a prudent lady of her stamp as a fever is generally to those of the strongest constitutions. But there is a sort of puny sickly reputation, that is always ailing, yet will outlive the robuster characters of a hundred prudes.

*Sir Ben.* True, madam, there are valetudinarians in reputation as well as constitution, who, being conscious of their weak part, avoid the least breath of air, and supply their want of stamina by care and circumspection.

*Mrs. Can.* Well, but this may be all a mistake. You know, Sir Benjamin, very trifling circumstances often give rise to the most injurious tales.

*Crab.* That they do, I'll be sworn, ma'am. O Lud! Mr. Surface, pray is it true that your uncle, Sir Oliver, is coming home?

*Jos. Surf.* Not that I know of, indeed, sir.

*Crab.* He has been in the East Indies a long time. You can scarcely remember him, I believe? Sad comfort, whenever he returns, to hear how your brother has gone on!

*Jos. Surf.* Charles has been imprudent, sir, to be sure; but I hope no busy people have already prejudiced Sir Oliver against him. He may reform.

*Sir Ben.* To be sure he may: for my part, I never believed him to be so utterly void of principle as people say; and, though he has lost all his friends, I am told nobody is better spoken of by the Jews.

*Crab.* That's true, egad, nephew. If the Old Jewry[1] was a ward, I believe Charles would be an alderman: no man more popular there, 'fore Gad! I hear he pays as many annuities as the Irish tontine;[2] and that, whenever he is sick, they have prayers for the recovery of his health in all the synagogues.

*Sir Ben.* Yet no man lives in greater splendour. They tell me, when he entertains his friends he will sit down to dinner with a dozen of his own securities; have a score of tradesmen waiting in the antechamber, and an officer behind every guest's chair.

*Jos. Surf.* This may be entertainment to you, gentlemen, but you pay very little regard to the feelings of a brother.

*Mar.* [*aside*]. Their malice is intolerable!—[*Aloud.*] Lady Sneerwell, I must wish you a good morning: I'm not very well. [*Exit*

*Mrs. Can.* O dear! she changes colour very much.

*Lady Sneer.* Do, Mrs. Candour, follow her: she may want your assistance.

*Mrs. Can.* That I will, with all my soul, ma'am.—Poor dear girl, who knows what her situation may be! [*Exit*

*Lady Sneer.* 'Twas nothing but that she could not bear to hear Charles reflected on, notwithstanding their difference.

*Sir Ben.* The young lady's *penchant*[3] is obvious.

*Crab.* But, Benjamin, you must not give up the pursuit for that: follow her, and put her into good humour. Repeat her some of your own verses. Come, I'll assist you.

*Sir Ben.* Mr. Surface, I did not mean to hurt you; but depend on't your brother is utterly undone.

*Crab.* O Lud, ay! undone as ever man was—can't raise a guinea!

*Sir Ben.* And every thing sold, I'm told, that was movable.

*Crab.* I have seen one that was at his house. Not a thing left but some empty bottles that were overlooked, and the family pictures, which I believe are framed in the wainscots.

*Sir Ben.* And I'm very sorry also to hear some bad stories against him. [*Going*

*Crab.* Oh, he has done many mean things, that's certain.

*Sir Ben.* But, however, as he's your brother— [*Going*

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[1] **Old Jewry:** the Jewish quarter of London.

[2] **tontine:** a form of life insurance.

[3] **penchant:** inclination.

*Crab.* We'll tell you all another opportunity.

[*Exeunt* CRABTREE *and* SIR BENJAMIN

*Lady Sneer.* Ha! ha! 'tis very hard for them to leave a subject they have not quite run down.

*Jos. Surf.* And I believe the abuse was no more acceptable to your ladyship than Maria.

*Lady Sneer.* I doubt her affections are farther engaged than we imagine. But the family are to be here this evening, so you may as well dine where you are, and we shall have an opportunity of observing farther; in the meantime, I'll go and plot mischief, and you shall study sentiment. [*Exeunt*

### SCENE II

### *A Room in Sir Peter Teazle's House*

*Enter* SIR PETER TEAZLE

*Sir Peter.* When an old bachelor marries a young wife, what is he to expect? 'Tis now six months since Lady Teazle made me the happiest of men—and I have been the most miserable dog ever since! We tiffed a little going to church, and fairly quarrelled before the bells had done ringing. I was more than once nearly choked with gall during the honeymoon, and had lost all comfort in life before my friends had done wishing me joy. Yet I chose with caution—a girl bred wholly in the country, who never knew luxury beyond one silk gown, nor dissipation above the annual gala of a race ball. Yet she now plays her part in all the extravagant fopperies of fashion and the town, with as ready a grace as if she never had seen a bush or a grass-plot out of Grosvenor Square! I am sneered at by all my acquaintance, and paragraphed in the newspapers. She dissipates my fortune, and contradicts all my humours; yet the worst of it is, I doubt I love her, or I should never bear all this. However, I'll never be weak enough to own it.

*Enter* ROWLEY

*Rowley.* Oh! Sir Peter, your servant: how is it with you, sir?

*Sir Pet.* Very bad, Master Rowley, very bad. I meet with nothing but crosses and vexations.

*Row.* What can have happened since yesterday?

*Sir Pet.* A good question to a married man!

*Row* Nay, I'm sure, Sir Peter, your lady can't be the cause of your uneasiness.

*Sir Pet.* Why, has any body told you she was dead?

*Row.* Come, come, Sir Peter, you love her, notwithstanding your tempers don't exactly agree.

*Sir Pet.* But the fault is entirely hers, Master Rowley. I am, myself, the sweetest-tempered man alive, and hate a teasing temper; and so I tell her a hundred times a day.

*Row.* Indeed!

*Sir Pet.* Ay; and what is very extraordinary, in all our disputes she is always in the wrong! But Lady Sneerwell, and the set she meets at her house, encourage the perverseness of her disposition. Then, to complete my vexation, Maria, my ward, whom I ought to have the power of a father over, is determined to turn rebel too, and absolutely refuses the man whom I have long resolved on for her husband; meaning, I suppose, to bestow herself on his profligate brother.

*Row.* You know, Sir Peter, I have always taken the liberty to differ with you on the subject of these two young gentlemen. I only wish you may not be deceived in your opinion of the elder. For Charles, my life on't! he will retrieve his errors yet. Their worthy father, once my honoured master, was, at his years, nearly as wild a spark; yet, when he died, he did not leave a more benevolent heart to lament his loss.

*Sir Pet.* You are wrong, Master Rowley. On their father's death, you know, I acted as a kind of guardian to them both, till their uncle Sir Oliver's liberality gave them an early independence: of course, no person could have more opportunities of judging of their hearts, and I was never mistaken in my life. Joseph is indeed a model for the young men of the age. He is a man of sentiment, and acts up to the sentiments he professes; but, for the other, take my word for't, if he had any grain of virtue by descent, he has dissipated it with the rest of his inheritance. Ah! my old friend, Sir Oliver, will be deeply mortified when he finds how part of his bounty has been misapplied.

*Row.* I am sorry to find you so violent against the young man, because this may be the most critical period of his fortune. I came hither with news that will surprise you.

*Sir Pet.* What! let me hear.

*Row.* Sir Oliver is arrived, and at this moment in town.

*Sir Pet.* How! you astonish me! I thought you did not expect him this month.

*Row.* I did not: but his passage has been remarkably quick.

*Sir Pet.* Egad, I shall rejoice to see my old friend. 'Tis sixteen years since we met. We have had many a day together:—but does he still enjoin us not to inform his nephews of his arrival?

*Row.* Most strictly. He means, before it is known, to make some trial of their dispositions.

*Sir Pet.* Ah! there needs no art to discover their merits—however, he shall have his way; but, pray, does he know I am married?

*Row.* Yes, and will soon wish you joy.

*Sir Pet.* What, as we drink health to a friend in a consumption! Ah! Oliver will laugh at me. We used to rail at matrimony together, but he has been steady to his text. Well, he must be soon at my house, though—I'll instantly give orders for his reception. But, Master Rowley, don't drop a word that Lady Teazle and I ever disagree.

*Row.* By no means.

*Sir Pet.* For I should never be able to stand Noll's jokes; so I'll have him think, Lord forgive me! that we are a very happy couple.

*Row.* I understand you:—but then you must be very careful not to differ while he is in the house with you.

*Sir Pet.* Egad, and so we must—and that's impossible. Ah! Master Rowley, when an old bachelor marries a young wife, he deserves—no—the crime carries its punishment along with it. [*Exeunt*

## ACT II

### SCENE I

*A Room in Sir Peter Teazle's House*

*Enter* SIR PETER *and* LADY TEAZLE

*Sir Pet.* Lady Teazle, Lady Teazle, I'll not bear it!

*Lady Teazle.* Sir Peter, Sir Peter, you may bear it or not, as you please; but I ought to have my own way in every thing, and, what's more, I will too. What! though I was educated in the country, I know very well that women of fashion in London are accountable to nobody after they are married.

*Sir Pet.* Very well, ma'am, very well; so a husband is to have no influence, no authority?

*Lady Teaz.* Authority! No, to be sure: if you wanted authority over me, you should have adopted me, and not married me: I am sure you were old enough.

*Sir Pet.* Old enough!—ay, there it is. Well, well, Lady Teazle, though my life may be made unhappy by your temper, I'll not be ruined by your extravagance!

*Lady Teaz.* My extravagance! I'm sure I'm not more extravagant than a woman of fashion ought to be.

*Sir Pet.* No, no, madam, you shall throw away no more sums on such unmeaning luxury. 'Slife! to spend as much to furnish your dressing-room with flowers in winter as would suffice to turn the Pantheon[1] into a greenhouse, and give a *fête champêtre*[2] at Christmas.

*Lady Teaz.* And am I to blame, Sir Peter, because flowers are dear in cold weather? You should find fault with the climate, and not with me. For my part, I'm sure I wish it was spring all the year round, and that roses grew under our feet!

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[1] **Pantheon:** concert hall in Oxford Street.

[2] **fête champêtre:** open air festival.

*Sir Pet.* Oons! madam—if you had been born to this, I shouldn't wonder at you talking thus; but you forget what your situation was when I married you.

*Lady Teaz.* No, no, I don't; 'twas a very disagreeable one, or I should never have married you.

*Sir Pet.* Yes, yes, madam, you were then in somewhat a humbler style—the daughter of a plain country squire. Recollect, Lady Teazle, when I saw you first sitting at your tambour,[1] in a pretty figured linen gown, with a bunch of keys at your side, your hair combed smooth over a roll, and your apartment hung round with fruits in worsted, of your own working.

*Lady Teaz.* Oh, yes! I remember it very well, and a curious life I led. My daily occupation to inspect the dairy, superintend the poultry, make extracts from the family receipt-book, and comb my aunt Deborah's lapdog.

*Sir Pet.* Yes, yes, ma'am, 'twas so indeed.

*Lady Teaz.* And then you know, my evening amusements! To draw patterns for ruffles, which I had not materials to make up; to play Pope Joan[2] with the curate; to read a sermon to my aunt; or to be stuck down to an old spinet to strum my father to sleep after a fox-chase.

*Sir Pet.* I am glad you have so good a memory. Yes, madam, these were the recreations I took you from; but now you must have your coach—*vis-à-vis*—and three powdered footmen before your chair;[3] and, in the summer, a pair of white cats to draw you to Kensington Gardens. No recollection, I suppose, when you were content to ride double, behind the butler, on a docked coach-horse.

*Lady Teaz.* No—I swear I never did that: I deny the butler and the coach-horse.

*Sir Pet.* This, madam, was your situation; and what have I done for you? I have made you a woman of fashion, of fortune, of rank—in short, I have made you my wife.

*Lady Teaz.* Well, then, and there is but one thing more you can make me to add to the obligations, that is——

*Sir Pet.* My widow, I suppose?

*Lady Teaz.* Hem! hem!

*Sir Pet.* I thank you, madam—but don't flatter yourself, for, though your ill conduct may disturb my peace of mind, it shall never break my heart, I promise you: however, I am equally obliged to you for the hint.

*Lady Teaz.* Then why will you endeavour to make yourself so disagreeable to me, and thwart me in every little elegant expense?

*Sir Pet.* 'Slife, madam, I say, had you any of these little elegant expenses when you married me?

*Lady Teaz.* Lud, Sir Peter! would you have me be out of the fashion?

*Sir Pet.* The fashion, indeed! what had you to do with the fashion before you married me?

*Lady Teaz.* For my part, I should think you would like to have your wife thought a woman of taste.

*Sir Pet.* Ay—there again—taste! Zounds! madam, you had no taste when you married me!

*Lady Teaz.* That's very true, indeed, Sir Peter! and after having married you, I should never pretend to taste again, I allow. But now, Sir Peter, since we have finished our daily jangle, I presume I may go to my engagement at Lady Sneerwell's.

*Sir Pet.* Ay, there's another precious circumstance—a charming set of acquaintance you have made there!

*Lady Teaz.* Nay, Sir Peter, they are all people of rank and fortune, and remarkably tenacious of reputation.

*Sir Pet.* Yes, egad, they are tenacious of reputation with a vengeance; for they don't choose any body should have a character but themselves! Such a crew! Ah! many a wretch has rid on a hurdle[4] who has done less mischief than these utterers of forged tales, coiners of scandal, and clippers of reputation.

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[1] **tambour:** embroidery frame.

[2] **Pope Joan:** a game of cards.

[3] **chair:** sedan chair.

[4] **hurdle:** cart for criminals.

*Lady Teaz.* What, would you restrain the freedom of speech?

*Sir Pet.* Ah! they have made you just as bad as any one of the society.

*Lady Teaz.* Why, I believe I do bear a part with a tolerable grace.

*Sir Pet.* Grace indeed!

*Lady Teaz.* But I vow I bear no malice against the people I abuse: when I say an ill-natured thing, 'tis out of pure good humour; and I take it for granted they deal exactly in the same manner with me. But, Sir Peter, you know you promised to come to Lady Sneerwell's too.

*Sir Pet.* Well, well, I'll call in, just to look after my own character.

*Lady Teaz.* Then, indeed, you must make haste after me, or you'll be too late. So good-bye to ye. [*Exit*

*Sir Pet.* So—I have gained much by my intended expostulation! Yet with what a charming air she contradicts every thing I say, and how pleasantly she shows her contempt for my authority! Well, though I can't make her love me, there is great satisfaction in quarrelling with her; and I think she never appears to such advantage as when she is doing every thing in her power to plague me. [*Exit*

## Scene II

### *A Room in Lady Sneerwell's House*

Lady Sneerwell, Mrs. Candour, Crabtree, Sir Benjamin Backbite, *and* Joseph Surface, *discovered.*

*Lady Sneer.* Nay, positively, we will hear it.

*Jos. Surf.* Yes, yes, the epigram, by all means.

*Sir Ben.* O plague on't, uncle! 'tis mere nonsense.

*Crab.* No, no; 'fore Gad, very clever for an extempore!

*Sir Ben.* But, ladies, you should be acquainted with the circumstance. You must know, that one day last week, as Lady Betty Curricle was taking the dust in Hyde Park, in a sort of duodecimo[1] phaeton she desired me to write some verses on her ponies; upon which, I took out my pocket-book, and in one moment produced the following:—

Sure never were seen two such beautiful ponies;
Other horses are clowns, but these macaronies:
To give them this title I'm sure can't be wrong,
Their legs are so slim, and their tails are so long.

*Crab.* There, ladies, done in the smack of a whip, and on horseback too.

*Jos. Surf.* A very Phœbus, mounted —indeed, Sir Benjamin!

*Sir Ben.* Oh dear, sir! trifles—trifles.

*Enter* Lady Teazle *and* Maria

*Mrs. Can.* I must have a copy.

*Lady Sneer.* Lady Teazle, I hope we shall see Sir Peter?

*Lady Teaz.* I believe he'll wait on your ladyship presently.

*Lady Sneer.* Maria, my love, you look grave. Come, you shall sit down to piquet[2] with Mr. Surface.

*Mar.* I take very little pleasure in cards—however, I'll do as your ladyship pleases.

*Lady Teaz.* [*aside*]. I am surprised Mr. Surface should sit down with her; I thought he would have embraced this opportunity of speaking to me before Sir Peter came.

*Mrs. Can.* Now, I'll die, but you are so scandalous, I'll forswear your society.

*Lady Teaz.* What's the matter, Mrs. Candour?

*Mrs. Can.* They'll not allow our friend Miss Vermilion to be handsome.

*Lady Sneer.* Oh, surely she is a pretty woman.

*Crab.* I am very glad you think so, ma'am.

*Mrs. Can.* She has a charming fresh colour.

*Lady Teaz.* Yes, when it is fresh put on.

*Mrs. Can.* Oh, fie! I'll swear her colour is natural: I have seen it come and go!

*Lady Teaz.* I dare swear you have, ma'am: it goes off at night, and comes again in the morning.

*Sir Ben.* True, ma'am, it not only comes and goes; but, what's more, egad, her maid can fetch and carry it!

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[1] duodecimo: diminutive.

[2] piquet: a game of cards for two people.

*Mrs. Can.* Ha! ha! ha! how I hate to hear you talk so! But surely, now, her sister is, or was, very handsome.

*Crab.* Who? Mrs. Evergreen? O Lord! she's six-and-fifty if she's an hour!

*Mrs. Can.* Now positively you wrong her; fifty-two or fifty-three is the utmost— and I don't think she looks more.

*Sir Ben.* Ah! there's no judging by her looks, unless one could see her face.

*Lady Sneer.* Well, well, if Mrs. Evergreen does take some pains to repair the ravages of time, you must allow she effects it with great ingenuity; and surely that's better than the careless manner in which the widow Ochre caulks her wrinkles.

*Sir Ben.* Nay, now, Lady Sneerwell, you are severe upon the widow. Come, come, 'tis not that she paints so ill—but, when she has finished her face, she joins it on so badly to her neck, that she looks like a mended statue, in which the connoisseur may see at once that the head is modern, though the trunk's antique.

*Crab.* Ha! ha! ha! Well said, nephew!

*Mrs. Can.* Ha! ha! ha! Well, you make me laugh; but I vow I hate you for it. What do you think of Miss Simper?

*Sir Ben.* Why, she has very pretty teeth.

*Lady Teaz.* Yea; and on that account, when she is neither speaking nor laughing (which very seldom happens), she never absolutely shuts her mouth, but leaves it always a-jar, as it were—thus. [*Shows her teeth.*]

*Mrs. Can.* How can you be so ill-natured?

*Lady Teaz.* Nay, I allow even that's better than the pains Mrs. Prim takes to conceal her losses in front. She draws her mouth till it positively resembles the aperture of a poor's-box,[1] and all her words appear to slide out edgewise, as it were—thus: [*Mimics.*] *How do you do, madam? Yes, madam.*

*Lady Sneer.* Very well, Lady Teazle; I see you can be a little severe.

*Lady Teaz.* In defence of a friend it is but justice. But here comes Sir Peter to spoil our pleasantry.

*Enter* Sir Peter Teazle

*Sir Pet.* Ladies, your most obedient. —[*Aside.*] Mercy on me, here is the whole set! a character dead at every word, I suppose.

*Mrs. Can.* I am rejoiced you are come, Sir Peter. They have been so censorious —and Lady Teazle as bad as any one.

*Sir Pet.* That must be very distressing to you, indeed, Mrs. Candour.

*Mrs. Can.* Oh, they will allow good qualities to nobody; not even good nature to our friend Mrs. Pursy.

*Lady Teaz.* What, the fat dowager who was at Mrs. Quadrille's last night?

*Mrs. Can.* Nay, her bulk is her misfortune; and, when she takes so much pains to get rid of it, you ought not to reflect on her.

*Lady Sneer.* That's very true, indeed.

*Lady Teaz.* Yes, I know she almost lives on acids and small whey; laces herself by pulleys; and often, in the hottest noon in summer, you may see her on a little squat pony, with her hair plaited up behind like a drummer's and puffing round the Ring[2] on a full trot.

*Mrs. Can.* I thank you, Lady Teazle, for defending her.

*Sir Pet.* Yes, a good defence, truly.

*Mrs. Can.* Truly, Lady Teazle is as censorious as Miss Sallow.

*Crab.* Yes, and she is a curious being to pretend to be censorious—an awkward gawky, without any one good point under heaven.

*Mrs. Can.* Positively you shall not be so very severe. Miss Sallow is a near relation of mine by marriage, and, as for her person, great allowance is to be made; for, let me tell you, a woman labours under many disadvantages who tries to pass for a girl of six-and-thirty.

*Lady Sneer.* Though, surely, she is handsome still—and for the weakness in her eyes, considering how much she reads by candlelight, it is not to be wondered at.

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[1] **poor's-box:** almsbox.

[2] **the Ring:** the fashionable ride in Hyde Park.

*Mrs. Can.* True, and then as to her manner; upon my word I think it is particularly graceful, considering she never had the least education: for you know her mother was a Welsh milliner, and her father a sugar-baker at Bristol.

*Sir Ben.* Ah! you are both of you too good-natured!

*Sir Pet.* [*aside*]. Yes, damned good-natured! This their own relation! mercy on me!

*Mrs. Can.* For my part, I own I cannot bear to hear a friend ill-spoken of.

*Sir Pet.* No, to be sure!

*Sir Ben.* Oh! you are of a moral turn. Mrs. Candour and I can sit for an hour and hear Lady Stucco talk sentiment.

*Lady Teaz.* Nay, I vow Lady Stucco is very well with the dessert after dinner; for she's just like the French fruit one cracks for mottoes—made up of paint and proverb.

*Mrs. Can.* Well, I will never join in ridiculing a friend; and so I constantly tell my cousin Ogle, and you all know what pretensions she has to be critical on beauty.

*Crab.* Oh, to be sure! she has herself the oddest countenance that ever was seen; 'tis a collection of features from all the different countries of the globe.

*Sir Ben.* So she has, indeed—an Irish front——

*Crab.* Caledonian locks——

*Sir Ben.* Dutch nose——

*Crab.* Austrian lips——

*Sir Ben.* Complexion of a Spaniard——

*Crab.* And teeth *à la Chinoise* ——

*Sir Ben.* In short, her face resembles a *table d'hôte* at Spa[1]—where no two guests are of a nation——

*Crab.* Or a congress at the close of a general war—wherein all the members, even to her eyes, appear to have a different interest, and her nose and chin are the only parties likely to join issue.

*Mrs. Can.* Ha! ha! ha!

*Sir Pet.* [*aside*]. Mercy on my life!—a person they dine with twice a week!

*Mrs. Can.* Nay, but I vow you shall not carry the laugh off so—for give me leave to say, that Mrs. Ogle——

*Sir Pet.* Madam, madam, I beg your pardon—there's no stopping these good gentlemen's tongues. But when I tell you, Mrs. Candour, that the lady they are abusing is a particular friend of mine, I hope you'll not take her part.

*Lady Sneer.* Ha! ha! ha! well said, Sir Peter! but you are a cruel creature—too phlegmatic yourself for a jest, and too peevish to allow wit in others.

*Sir Pet.* Ah, madam, true wit is more nearly allied to good nature than your ladyship is aware of.

*Lady Teaz.* True, Sir Peter: I believe they are so near akin that they can never be united.

*Sir Ben.* Or rather, suppose them man and wife, because one seldom sees them together.

*Lady Teaz.* But Sir Peter is such an enemy to scandal, I believe he would have it put down by parliament.

*Sir Pet.* 'Fore heaven, madam, if they were to consider the sporting with reputation of as much importance as poaching on manors, and pass an act for the preservation of fame, as well as game, I believe many would thank them for the bill.

*Lady Sneer.* O Lud! Sir Peter; would you deprive us of our privileges?

*Sir Pet.* Ay, madam; and then no person should be permitted to kill characters and run down reputations, but qualified old maids and disappointed widows.

*Lady Sneer.* Go, you monster!

*Mrs. Can.* But, surely, you would not be quite so severe on those who only report what they hear?

*Sir Pet.* Yes, madam, I would have law merchant[2] for them too; and in all cases of slander currency, whenever the drawer of the lie was not to be found, the injured parties should have a right to come on any of the indorsers.[3]

*Crab.* Well, for my part, I believe there never was a scandalous tale without some foundation.

*Lady Sneer.* Come, ladies, shall we sit down to cards in the next room?

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[1] **Spa:** a watering place in Belgium.

[2] **law merchant:** mercantile law, covering insurances, contracts, etc.

[3] **indorsers:** An endorser of a note is responsible for its payment.

*Enter* Servant, *who whispers* Sir Peter

*Sir Pet.* I'll be with them directly.—[*Exit* Servant]. [*Aside.*] I'll get away unperceived.

*Lady Sneer.* Sir Peter, you are not going to leave us?

*Sir Pet.* Your ladyship must excuse me; I'm called away by particular business. But I leave my character behind me. [*Exit*

*Sir Ben.* Well—certainly, Lady Teazle, that lord of yours is a strange being: I could tell you some stories of him would make you laugh heartily if he were not your husband.

*Lady Teaz.* Oh, pray don't mind that; come, do let's hear them.

[*Exeunt all but* Joseph Surface *and* Maria

*Jos. Surf.* Maria, I see you have no satisfaction in this society.

*Mar.* How is it possible I should? If to raise malicious smiles at the infirmities or misfortunes of those who have never injured us be the province of wit or humour, Heaven grant me a double portion of dulness!

*Jos. Surf.* Yet they appear more ill-natured than they are; they have no malice at heart.

*Mar.* Then is their conduct still more contemptible; for, in my opinion, nothing could excuse the intemperance of their tongues but a natural and uncontrollable bitterness of mind.

*Jos. Surf.* Undoubtedly, madam; and it has always been a sentiment of mine, that to propagate a malicious truth wantonly is more despicable than to falsify from revenge. But can you, Maria, feel thus for others, and be unkind to me alone? Is hope to be denied the tenderest passion?

*Mar.* Why will you distress me by renewing this subject?

*Jos. Surf.* Ah, Maria! you would not treat me thus, and oppose your guardian, Sir Peter's will, but that I see that profligate Charles is still a favoured rival.

*Mar.* Ungenerously urged! But, whatever my sentiments are for that unfortunate young man, be assured I shall not feel more bound to give him up, because his distresses have lost him the regard even of a brother.

*Jos. Surf.* Nay, but, Maria, do not leave me with a frown: by all that's honest, I swear [*Kneels*].

*Reënter* Lady Teazle *behind*

[*Aside.*] Gad's life, here's Lady Teazle.—[*Aloud to* Maria.] You must not—no, you shall not—for, though I have the greatest regard for Lady Teazle——

*Mar.* Lady Teazle!

*Jos. Surf.* Yet were Sir Peter to suspect——

*Lady Teaz.* [*coming forward*]. What is this, pray? Does he take her for me?—Child, you are wanted in the next room.—[*Exit* Maria.] What is all this, pray?

*Jos. Surf.* Oh, the most unlucky circumstance in nature! Maria has somehow suspected the tender concern I have for your happiness, and threatened to acquaint Sir Peter with her suspicions, and I was just endeavouring to reason with her when you came in.

*Lady Teaz.* Indeed! but you seemed to adopt a very tender mode of reasoning—do you usually argue on your knees?

*Jos. Surf.* Oh, she's a child, and I thought a little bombast——But, Lady Teazle, when are you to give me your judgment on my library, as you promised?

*Lady Teaz.* No, no; I begin to think it would be imprudent, and you know I admit you as a lover no farther than fashion requires.

*Jos. Surf.* True—a mere Platonic cicisbeo,[1] what every wife is entitled to.

*Lady Teaz.* Certainly, one must not be out of the fashion. However, I have so many of my country prejudices left, that, though Sir Peter's ill humour may vex me ever so, it never shall provoke me to——

*Jos. Surf.* The only revenge in your power. Well, I applaud your moderation.

*Lady Teaz.* Go—you are an insinuating wretch! But we shall be missed—let us join the company.

*Jos. Surf.* But we had best not return together.

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[1] cicisbeo: gallant.

*Lady Teaz.* Well, don't stay; for Maria sha'n't come to hear any more of your reasoning, I promise you. [*Exit*

*Jos. Surf.* A curious dilemma, truly, my politics have run me into! I wanted, at first, only to ingratiate myself with Lady Teazle, that she might not be my enemy with Maria; and I have, I don't know how, become her serious lover. Sincerely I begin to wish I had never made such a point of gaining so very good a character, for it has led me into so many cursed rogueries that I doubt I shall be exposed at last. [*Exit*

### Scene III

*A Room in Sir Peter Teazle's House*

*Enter* Sir Oliver Surface *and* Rowley

*Sir Oliver.* Ha! ha! ha! so my old friend is married, hey?—a young wife out of the country. Ha! ha! ha! that he should have stood bluff to old bachelor so long, and sink into a husband at last!

*Row.* But you must not rally him on the subject, Sir Oliver; 'tis a tender point, I assure you, though he has been married only seven months.

*Sir Oliv.* Then he has been just half a year on the stool of repentance!—Poor Peter! But you say he has entirely given up Charles—never sees him, hey?

*Row.* His prejudice against him is astonishing, and I am sure greatly increased by a jealousy of him with Lady Teazle, which he has industriously been led into by a scandalous society in the neighbourhood, who have contributed not a little to Charles's ill name. Whereas the truth is, I believe, if the lady is partial to either of them, his brother is the favourite.

*Sir Oliv.* Ay, I know there are a set of malicious, prating, prudent gossips, both male and female, who murder characters to kill time, and will rob a young fellow of his good name before he has years to know the value of it. But I am not to be prejudiced against my nephew by such, I promise you! No, no: if Charles has done nothing false or mean, I shall compound[1] for his extravagance.

*Row.* Then, my life on't, you will reclaim him. Ah, sir, it gives me new life to find that your heart is not turned against him, and that the son of my good old master has one friend, however, left.

*Sir Oliv.* What! shall I forget, Master Rowley, when I was at his years myself? Egad, my brother and I were neither of us very prudent youths; and yet, I believe, you have not seen many better men than your old master was?

*Row.* Sir, 'tis this reflection gives me assurance that Charles may yet be a credit to his family. But here comes Sir Peter.

*Sir Oliv.* Egad, so he does! Mercy on me! he's greatly altered, and seems to have a settled married look! One may read husband in his face at this distance.

*Enter* Sir Peter Teazle

*Sir Pet.* Ha! Sir Oliver—my old friend! Welcome to England a thousand times!

*Sir Oliv.* Thank you, thank you, Sir Peter! and i' faith I am glad to find you well, believe me!

*Sir Pet.* Oh! 'tis a long time since we met—fifteen years, I doubt, Sir Oliver, and many a cross accident in the time.

*Sir Oliv.* Ay, I have had my share. But, what! I find you are married, hey, my old boy? Well, well, it can't be helped; and so—I wish you joy with all my heart!

*Sir Pet.* Thank you, thank you, Sir Oliver.—Yes, I have entered into—the happy state; but we'll not talk of that now.

*Sir Oliv.* True, true, Sir Peter; old friends should not begin on grievances at first meeting. No, no, no.

*Row.* [*aside to* Sir Oliver]. Take care, pray, sir.

*Sir Oliv.* Well, so one of my nephews is a wild rogue, hey?

*Sir Pet.* Wild! Ah! my old friend, I grieve for your disappointment there; he's a lost young man, indeed. However, his brother will make you amends; Joseph is, indeed, what a youth should be—every body in the world speaks well of him.

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[1] compound: make an adjustment.

*Sir Oliv.* I am sorry to hear it; he has too good a character to be an honest fellow. Every body speaks well of him! Pshaw! then he has bowed as low to knaves and fools as to the honest dignity of genius and virtue.

*Sir Pet.* What, Sir Oliver! do you blame him for not making enemies?

*Sir Oliv.* Yes, if he has merit enough to deserve them.

*Sir Pet.* Well, well—you'll be convinced when you know him. 'Tis edification to hear him converse; he professes the noblest sentiments.

*Sir Oliv.* Oh, plague of his sentiments! If he salutes me with a scrap of morality in his mouth, I shall be sick directly. But, however, don't mistake me, Sir Peter; I don't mean to defend Charles's errors: but, before I form my judgment of either of them, I intend to make a trial of their hearts; and my friend Rowley and I have planned something for the purpose.

*Row.* And Sir Peter shall own for once he has been mistaken.

*Sir Pet.* Oh, my life on Joseph's honour!

*Sir Oliv.* Well—come, give us a bottle of good wine, and we'll drink the lads' health, and tell you our scheme.

*Sir Pet.* *Allons*,[1] then!

*Sir Oliv.* And don't, Sir Peter, be so severe against your old friend's son. Odds my life! I am not sorry that he has run out of the course a little: for my part, I hate to see prudence clinging to the green suckers of youth; 'tis like ivy round a sapling, and spoils the growth of the tree. [*Exeunt*

## ACT III

### Scene I

### *A Room in Sir Peter Teazle's House*

*Enter* Sir Peter Teazle, Sir Oliver Surface, *and* Rowley

*Sir Pet.* Well, then, we will see this fellow first, and have our wine afterwards. But how is this, Master Rowley? I don't see the jest of your scheme.

*Row.* Why, sir, this Mr. Stanley, whom I was speaking of, is nearly related to them by their mother. He was once a merchant in Dublin, but has been ruined by a series of undeserved misfortunes. He has applied, by letter, since his confinement, both to Mr. Surface and Charles: from the former he has received nothing but evasive promises of future service, while Charles has done all that his extravagance has left him power to do; and he is, at this time, endeavouring to raise a sum of money, part of which, in the midst of his own distresses, I know he intends for the service of poor Stanley.

*Sir Oliv.* Ah! he is my brother's son.

*Sir Pet.* Well, but how is Sir Oliver personally to——

*Row.* Why, sir, I will inform Charles and his brother that Stanley has obtained permission to apply personally to his friends; and, as they have neither of them ever seen him, let Sir Oliver assume his character, and he will have a fair opportunity of judging, at least, of the benevolence of their dispositions: and believe me, sir, you will find in the youngest brother one who, in the midst of folly and dissipation, has still, as our immortal bard expresses it,—

"a heart to pity, and a hand,
Open as day, for melting charity.[2]"

*Sir Pet.* Pshaw! What signifies his having an open hand or purse either, when he has nothing left to give? Well, well, make the trial, if you please. But where is the fellow whom you brought for Sir Oliver to examine, relative to Charles's affairs?

*Row.* Below, waiting his commands, and no one can give him better intelligence.—This, Sir Oliver, is a friendly Jew, who, to do him justice, has done every thing in his power to bring your nephew to a proper sense of his extravagance.

*Sir Pet.* Pray let us have him in.

*Row.* [*Calls to* Servant.] Desire Mr. Moses to walk upstairs.

*Sir Pet.* But, pray, why should you suppose he will speak the truth?

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[1] Allons: Come on!

[2] a heart . . . charity: *2 Henry IV*, Act IV, Sc. 4, lines 31–32.

*Row.* Oh, I have convinced him that he has no chance of recovering certain sums advanced to Charles but through the bounty of Sir Oliver, who he knows is arrived; so that you may depend on his fidelity to his own interests. I have also another evidence in my power, one Snake, whom I have detected in a matter little short of forgery, and shall shortly produce to remove some of your prejudices, Sir Peter, relative to Charles and Lady Teazle.

*Sir Pet.* I have heard too much on that subject.

*Row.* Here comes the honest Israelite.

*Enter* MOSES

—This is Sir Oliver.

*Sir Oliv.* Sir, I understand you have lately had great dealings with my nephew Charles.

*Moses.* Yes, Sir Oliver, I have done all I could for him; but he was ruined before he came to me for assistance.

*Sir Oliv.* That was unlucky, truly; for you have had no opportunity of showing your talents.

*Mos.* None at all; I hadn't the pleasure of knowing his distresses till he was some thousands worse than nothing.

*Sir Oliv.* Unfortunate, indeed! But I suppose you have done all in your power for him, honest Moses?

*Mos.* Yes, he knows that. This very evening I was to have brought him a gentleman from the city, who does not know him, and will, I believe, advance him some money.

*Sir Pet.* What, one Charles has never had money from before?

*Mos.* Yes, Mr. Premium, of Crutched Friars,[1] formerly a broker.

*Sir Pet.* Egad, Sir Oliver, a thought strikes me!—Charles, you say, does not know Mr. Premium?

*Mos.* Not at all.

*Sir Pet.* Now then, Sir Oliver, you may have a better opportunity of satisfying yourself than by an old romancing tale of a poor relation: go with my friend Moses, and represent Premium, and then, I'll answer for it, you'll see your nephew in all his glory.

*Sir Oliv.* Egad, I like this idea better than the other, and I may visit Joseph afterwards as old Stanley.

*Sir Pet.* True—so you may.

*Row.* Well, this is taking Charles rather at a disadvantage, to be sure. However, Moses, you understand Sir Peter, and will be faithful?

*Mos.* You may depend upon me.—[*Looks at his watch.*] This is near the time I was to have gone.

*Sir Oliv.* I'll accompany you as soon as you please, Moses——But hold! I have forgot one thing—how the plague shall I be able to pass for a Jew?

*Mos.* There's no need—the principal is Christian.

*Sir Oliv.* Is he? I'm very sorry to hear it. But, then again, an't I rather too smartly dressed to look like a money lender?

*Sir Pet.* Not at all; 'twould not be out of character, if you went in your own carriage—would it, Moses?

*Mos.* Not in the least.

*Sir Oliv.* Well, but how must I talk; there's certainly some cant of usury and mode of treating that I ought to know.

*Sir Pet.* Oh, there's not much to learn. The great point, as I take it, is to be exorbitant enough in your demands. Hey, Moses?

*Mos.* Yes, that's a very great point.

*Sir Oliv.* I'll answer for't I'll not be wanting in that. I'll ask him eight or ten per cent. on the loan, at least.

*Mos.* If you ask him no more than that, you'll be discovered immediately.

*Sir Oliv.* Hey! what, the plague! how much then?

*Mos.* That depends upon the circumstances. If he appears not very anxious for the supply, you should require only forty or fifty per cent.; but if you find him in great distress, and want the moneys very bad, you may ask double.

*Sir Pet.* A good honest trade you're learning, Sir Oliver!

*Sir Oliv.* Truly, I think so—and not unprofitable.

*Mos.* Then, you know, you haven't the moneys yourself, but are forced to borrow them for him of a friend.

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[1] Crutched Friars: a London street.

*Sir Oliv.* Oh! I borrow it of a friend, do I?

*Mos.* And your friend is an unconscionable dog: but you can't help that.

*Sir Oliv.* My friend an unconscionable dog, is he?

*Mos.* Yes, and he himself has not the moneys by him, but is forced to sell stock at a great loss.

*Sir Oliv.* He is forced to sell stock at a great loss, is he? Well, that's very kind of him.

*Sir Pet.* I' faith, Sir Oliver—Mr. Premium, I mean—you'll soon be master of the trade. But, Moses! would not you have him run out a little against the Annuity Bill?[1] That would be in character, I should think.

*Mos.* Very much.

*Row.* And lament that a young man now must be at years of discretion before he is suffered to ruin himself?

*Mos.* Ay, great pity!

*Sir Pet.* And abuse the public for allowing merit to an act whose only object is to snatch misfortune and imprudence from the rapacious gripe of usury, and give the minor a chance of inheriting his estate without being undone by coming into possession.

*Sir Oliv.* So, so—Moses shall give me farther instructions as we go together.

*Sir Pet.* You will not have much time, for your nephew lives hard by.

*Sir Oliv.* Oh, never fear! my tutor appears so able, that though Charles lived in the next street, it must be my own fault if I am not a complete rogue before I turn the corner.

[*Exit with* MOSES

*Sir Pet.* So, now, I think Sir Oliver will be convinced: you are partial, Rowley, and would have prepared Charles for the other plot.

*Row.* No, upon my word, Sir Peter.

*Sir Pet.* Well, go bring me this Snake, and I'll hear what he has to say presently. I see Maria, and want to speak with her.—[*Exit* ROWLEY.] I should be glad to be convinced my suspicions of Lady Teazle and Charles were unjust. I have never yet opened my mind on this subject to my friend Joseph—I am determined I will do it—he will give me his opinion sincerely.

*Enter* MARIA

So, child, has Mr. Surface returned with you?

*Mar.* No, sir; he was engaged.

*Sir Pet.* Well, Maria, do you not reflect, the more you converse with that amiable young man, what return his partiality for you deserves?

*Mar.* Indeed, Sir Peter, your frequent importunity on this subject distresses me extremely—you compel me to declare, that I know no man who has ever paid me a particular attention whom I would not prefer to Mr. Surface.

*Sir Pet.* So—here's perverseness! No, no, Maria, 'tis Charles only whom you would prefer. 'Tis evident his vices and follies have won your heart.

*Mar.* This is unkind, sir. You know I have obeyed you in neither seeing nor corresponding with him: I have heard enough to convince me that he is unworthy my regard. Yet I cannot think it culpable, if, while my understanding severely condemns his vices, my heart suggests some pity for his distresses.

*Sir Pet.* Well, well, pity him as much as you please; but give your heart and hand to a worthier object.

*Mar.* Never to his brother!

*Sir Pet.* Go, perverse and obstinate! But take care, madam; you have never yet known what the authority of a guardian is: don't compel me to inform you of it.

*Mar.* I can only say, you shall not have just reason. 'Tis true, by my father's will, I am for a short period bound to regard you as his substitute; but must cease to think you so, when you would compel me to be miserable.

[*Exit*

*Sir Pet.* Was ever man so crossed as I am, every thing conspiring to fret me! I had not been involved in matrimony a fortnight, before her father, a hale and hearty man, died, on purpose, I believe, for the pleasure of plaguing me with the care of his daughter.—[Lady Teazle *sings without.*] But here comes my helpmate! She appears in great good humour. How happy I should be if I could tease her into loving me, though but a little!

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[1] Annuity Bill: A bill of 1777 providing that contracts with minors for annuities shall be void.

*Enter* Lady Teazle

*Lady Teaz.* Lud! Sir Peter, I hope you haven't been quarrelling with Maria? It is not using me well to be ill-humoured when I am not by.

*Sir Pet.* Ah, Lady Teazle, you might have the power to make me good-humoured at all times.

*Lady Teaz.* I am sure I wish I had; for I want you to be in a charming sweet temper at this moment. Do be good-humoured now, and let me have two hundred pounds, will you?

*Sir Pet.* Two hundred pounds; what, an't I to be in a good humour without paying for it! But speak to me thus, and i' faith there's nothing I could refuse you. You shall have it; but seal me a bond for the repayment.

*Lady Teaz.* Oh, no—there—my note of hand will do as well. [*Offering her hand.*]

*Sir Pet.* And you shall no longer reproach me with not giving you an independent settlement. I mean shortly to surprise you: but shall we always live thus, hey?

*Lady Teaz.* If you please. I'm sure I don't care how soon we leave off quarrelling, provided you'll own you were tired first.

*Sir Pet.* Well—then let our future contest be, who shall be most obliging.

*Lady Teaz.* I assure you, Sir Peter, good nature becomes you. You look now as you did before we were married, when you used to walk with me under the elms, and tell me stories of what a gallant you were in your youth, and chuck me under the chin, you would; and asked me if I thought I could love an old fellow, who would deny me nothing—didn't you?

*Sir Pet.* Yes, yes, and you were as kind and attentive——

*Lady Teaz.* Ay, so I was, and would always take your part, when my acquaintance used to abuse you, and turn you into ridicule.

*Sir Pet.* Indeed!

*Lady Teaz.* Ay, and when my cousin Sophy has called you a stiff, peevish old bachelor, and laughed at me for thinking of marrying one who might be my father, I have always defended you, and said, I didn't think you so ugly by any means.

*Sir Pet.* Thank you.

*Lady Teaz.* And I dared say you'd make a very good sort of a husband.

*Sir Pet.* And you prophesied right; and we shall now be the happiest couple——

*Lady Teaz.* And never differ again?

*Sir Pet.* No, never!—though at the same time, indeed, my dear Lady Teazle, you must watch your temper very seriously; for in all our little quarrels, my dear, if you recollect, my love, you always began first.

*Lady Teaz.* I beg your pardon, my dear Sir Peter: indeed, you always gave the provocation.

*Sir Pet.* Now see, my angel! take care—contradicting isn't the way to keep friends.

*Lady Teaz.* Then don't you begin it, my love!

*Sir Pet.* There, now! you—you are going on. You don't perceive, my life, that you are just doing the very thing which you know always makes me angry.

*Lady Teaz.* Nay, you know, if you will be angry without any reason, my dear——

*Sir Pet.* There! now you want to quarrel again.

*Lady Teaz.* No, I'm sure I don't: but, if you will be so peevish——

*Sir Pet.* There now! who begins first?

*Lady Teaz.* Why, you, to be sure. I said nothing—but there's no bearing your temper.

*Sir Pet.* No, no, madam: the fault's in your own temper.

*Lady Teaz.* Ay, you are just what my cousin Sophy said you would be.

*Sir Pet.* Your cousin Sophy is a forward, impertinent gipsy.

*Lady Teaz.* You are a great bear, I'm sure, to abuse my relations.

*Sir Pet.* Now may all the plagues of marriage be doubled on me, if ever I try to be friends with you any more!

*Lady Teaz.* So much the better.

*Sir Pet.* No, no, madam: 'tis evident you never cared a pin for me, and I was a madman to marry you—a pert, rural coquette, that had refused half the honest squires in the neighbourhood!

*Lady Teaz.* And I am sure I was a fool to marry you—an old dangling bachelor, who was single at fifty, only because he never could meet with any one who would have him.

*Sir Pet.* Ay, ay, madam; but you were pleased enough to listen to me: you never had such an offer before.

*Lady Teaz.* No! didn't I refuse Sir Tivy Terrier, who every body said would have been a better match? for his estate is just as good as yours, and he has broke his neck since we have been married.

*Sir Pet.* I have done with you, madam! You are an unfeeling, ungrateful—but there's an end of everything. I believe you capable of everything that is bad. Yes, madam, I now believe the reports relative to you and Charles, madam. Yes, madam, you and Charles are, not without grounds——

*Lady Teaz.* Take care, Sir Peter! you had better not insinuate any such thing! I'll not be suspected without cause, I promise you.

*Sir Pet.* Very well, madam! very well! A separate maintenance as soon as you please. Yes, madam, or a divorce! I'll make an example of myself for the benefit of all old bachelors. Let us separate, madam.

*Lady Teaz.* Agreed! agreed! And now, my dear Sir Peter, we are of a mind once more, we may be the happiest couple, and never differ again, you know: ha! ha! ha! Well, you are going to be in a passion, I see, and I shall only interrupt you—so, bye! bye! [*Exit*

*Sir Pet.* Plagues and tortures! can't I make her angry either! Oh, I am the most miserable fellow! But I'll not bear her presuming to keep her temper: no! she may break my heart, but she sha'n't keep her temper. [*Exit*

## SCENE II

### *A Room in Charles Surface's House*

*Enter* TRIP, MOSES, *and* SIR OLIVER SURFACE

*Trip.* Here, Master Moses! if you'll stay a moment I'll try whether—what's the gentleman's name?

*Sir Oliv.* [*aside to* MOSES]. Mr. Moses, what is my name?

*Mos.* Mr. Premium.

*Trip.* Premium—very well. [*Exit, taking snuff*

*Sir Oliv.* To judge by the servants, one wouldn't believe the master was ruined. But what!—sure, this was my brother's house?

*Mos.* Yes, sir; Mr. Charles bought it of Mr. Joseph, with the furniture, pictures, etc., just as the old gentleman left it. Sir Peter thought it a piece of extravagance in him.

*Sir Oliv.* In my mind, the other's economy in selling it to him was more reprehensible by half.

*Reënter* TRIP

*Trip.* My master says you must wait, gentlemen: he has company, and can't speak with you yet.

*Sir Oliv.* If he knew who it was wanted to see him, perhaps he would not send such a message.

*Trip.* Yes, yes, sir; he knows you are here—I did not forget little Premium: no, no, no.

*Sir Oliv.* Very well; and I pray, sir, what may be your name?

*Trip.* Trip, sir; my name is Trip, at your service.

*Sir Oliv.* Well, then, Mr. Trip, you have a pleasant sort of place here, I guess?

*Trip.* Why, yes—here are three or four of us pass our time agreeably enough; but then our wages are sometimes a little in arrear—and not very great either—but fifty pounds a year, and find our own bags[1] and bouquets.

*Sir Oliv.* [*aside*]. Bags and bouquets! halters and bastinadoes!

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[1] bags: for the back hair.

*Trip.* And *à propos*, Moses, have you been able to get me that little bill discounted?

*Sir Oliv.* [*aside*]. Wants to raise money too!—mercy on me! Has his distresses too, I warrant, like a lord, and affects creditors and duns.

*Mos.* 'Twas not to be done, indeed, Mr. Trip.

*Trip.* Good lack, you surprise me! My friend Brush has indorsed it, and I thought when he put his name at the back of a bill 'twas the same as cash.

*Mos.* No, 'twouldn't do.

*Trip.* A small sum—but twenty pounds. Hark'ee, Moses, do you think you couldn't get it me by way of annuity?

*Sir Oliv.* [*aside*]. An annuity! ha! ha! a footman raise money by way of annuity! Well done, luxury, egad!

*Mos.* Well, but you must insure your place.

*Trip.* Oh, with all my heart! I'll insure my place, and my life too, if you please.

*Sir Oliv.* [*aside*]. It's more than I would your neck.

*Mos.* But is there nothing you could deposit?

*Trip.* Why, nothing capital of my master's wardrobe has dropped lately; but I could give you a mortgage on some of his winter clothes, with equity of redemption before November—or you shall have the reversion of the French velvet, or a post-obit[1] on the blue and silver;—these, I should think, Moses, with a few pair of point ruffles, as a collateral security—hey, my little fellow?

*Mos.* Well, well.

*Bell rings.*

*Trip.* Egad, I heard the bell! I believe, gentlemen, I can now introduce you. Don't forget the annuity, little Moses! This way, gentlemen, I'll insure my place, you know.

*Sir Oliv.* [*aside*]. If the man be a shadow of the master, this is the temple of dissipation indeed! [*Exeunt*

### SCENE III

*Another Room in the Same*

CHARLES SURFACE, SIR HARRY BUMPER, CARELESS, *and* GENTLEMEN, *discovered drinking.*

*Charles Surface.* 'Fore heaven, 'tis true!—there's the great degeneracy of the age. Many of our acquaintance have taste, spirit, and politeness; but, plague on't, they won't drink.

*Careless.* It is so, indeed, Charles! they give in to all the substantial luxuries of the table, and abstain from nothing but wine and wit. Oh, certainly society suffers by it intolerably! for now, instead of the social spirit of raillery that used to mantle over a glass of bright Burgundy, their conversation is become just like the Spa-water they drink, which has all the pertness and flatulency of champagne, without its spirit or flavour.

*1st Gent.* But what are they to do who love play better than wine?

*Care.* True! there's Sir Harry diets himself for gaming, and is now under a hazard regimen.

*Chas. Surf.* Then he'll have the worst of it. What! you wouldn't train a horse for the course by keeping him from corn? For my part, egad, I am never so successful as when I am a little merry: let me throw on a bottle of champagne, and I never lose.

*All.* Hey, what?

*Chas. Surf.* At least I never feel my losses, which is exactly the same thing.

*2nd Gent.* Ay, that I believe.

*Chas. Surf.* And then, what man can pretend to be a believer in love, who is an abjurer of wine? 'Tis the test by which the lover knows his own heart. Fill a dozen bumpers to a dozen beauties, and she that floats at the top is the maid that has bewitched you.

*Care.* Now then, Charles, be honest, and give us your real favourite.

*Chas. Surf.* Why, I have withheld her only in compassion to you. If I toast her, you must give a round of her peers, which is impossible—on earth.

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[1] **post-obit:** A bond for a loan payable on inheritance after death.

*Care.* Oh! then we'll find some canonised vestals or heathen goddesses that will do, I warrant!

*Chas. Surf.* Here then, bumpers, you rogues! bumpers! Maria! Maria!——

*Sir Harry.* Maria who?

*Chas. Surf.* Oh, damn the surname!—'tis too formal to be registered in Love's calendar—Maria!

*All.* Maria!

*Chas. Surf.* But now, Sir Harry, beware, we must have beauty superlative.

*Care.* Nay, never study, Sir Harry: we'll stand to the toast, though your mistress should want an eye, and you know you have a song will excuse you.

*Sir Har.* Egad, so I have! and I'll give him the song instead of the lady. [*Sings.*]

Here's to the maiden of bashful fifteen;
  Here's to the widow of fifty;
Here's to the flaunting extravagant quean,[1]
  And here's to the housewife that's thrifty

*Chorus.* Let the toast pass,—
  Drink to the lass,
I'll warrant she'll prove an excuse for the glass.

Here's to the charmer whose dimples we prize;
  Now to the maid who has none, sir:
Here's to the girl with a pair of blue eyes,
  And here's to the nymph with but one, sir.

*Chorus.* Let the toast pass, etc.

Here's to the maid with a bosom of snow:
  Now to her that's as brown as a berry:
Here's to the wife with a face full of woe.
  And now to the damsel that's merry.

*Chorus.* Let the toast pass, etc.

For let 'em be clumsy, or let 'em be slim,
  Young or ancient, I care not a feather;
So fill a pint bumper quite up to the brim,
  So fill up your glasses, nay, fill to the brim,
And let us e'en toast them together.

*Chorus.* Let the toast pass, etc.

*All.* Bravo! bravo!

*Enter* TRIP, *and whispers* CHARLES SURFACE

*Chas. Surf.* Gentlemen, you must excuse me a little.—Careless, take the chair, will you?

*Care.* Nay, pr'ythee, Charles, what now? This is one of your peerless beauties, I suppose, has dropped in by chance?

*Chas. Surf.* No, faith! To tell you the truth, 'tis a Jew and a broker, who are come by appointment.

*Care.* Oh! let's have the Jew in.

*1st Gent.* Ay, and the broker too, by all means.

*2nd Gent.* Yes, yes, the Jew and the broker.

*Chas. Surf.* Egad, with all my heart!—Trip, bid the gentlemen walk in.—[*Exit* TRIP.] Though there's one of them a stranger, I can tell you.

*Care.* Charles, let us give them some generous Burgundy, and perhaps they'll grow conscientious.

*Chas. Surf.* Oh, hang 'em, no! wine does but draw forth a man's natural qualities; and to make them drink would only be to whet their knavery.

*Reënter* TRIP, *with* SIR OLIVER SURFACE *and* MOSES

*Chas. Surf.* So, honest Moses; walk in, pray, Mr. Premium—that's the gentleman's name, isn't it, Moses?

*Mos.* Yes, sir.

*Chas. Surf.* Set chairs, Trip.—Sit down, Mr. Premium.—Glasses, Trip.—[TRIP *gives chairs and glasses, and exit.*] Sit down, Moses.—Come, Mr. Premium, I'll give you a sentiment; here's *Success to usury!*—Moses, fill the gentleman a bumper.

*Mos.* Success to usury!

*Drinks.*

*Care.* Right, Moses—usury is prudence and industry, and deserves to succeed.

*Sir Oliv.* Then here's—All the success it deserves!

*Drinks.*

*Care.* No, no, that won't do! Mr. Premium, you have demurred at the toast, and must drink it in a pint bumper.

*1st Gent.* A pint bumper, at least.

*Mos.* Oh, pray, sir, consider—Mr. Premium's a gentleman.

*Care.* And therefore loves good wine.

*2nd Gent.* Give Moses a quart glass—this is mutiny, and a high contempt for the chair.

*Care.* Here, now for't! I'll see justice done to the last drop of my bottle.

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[1] quean: girl.

*Sir Oliv.* Nay, pray, gentlemen—I did not expect this usage.

*Chas. Surf.* No, hang it, you shan't; Mr. Premium's a stranger.

*Sir Oliv.* [*aside*]. Odd! I wish I was well out of their company.

*Care.* Plague on 'em then! if they won't drink, we'll not sit down with them. Come, Harry, the dice are in the next room.—Charles, you'll join us when you have finished your business with the gentlemen?

*Chas. Surf.* I will! I will!—[*Exeunt* SIR HARRY, BUMPER *and* GENTLEMEN; CARELESS *following.*] Careless!

*Care.* [*returning*]. Well!

*Chas. Surf.* Perhaps I may want you.

*Care.* Oh, you know I am always ready: word, note, or bond, 'tis all the same to me. [*Exit*

*Mos.* Sir, this is Mr. Premium, a gentleman of the strictest honour and secrecy; and always performs what he undertakes. Mr. Premium, this is——

*Chas. Surf.* Pshaw! have done. Sir, my friend Moses is a very honest fellow, but a little slow at expression: he'll be an hour giving us our titles. Mr. Premium, the plain state of the matter is this: I am an extravagant young fellow who wants to borrow money; you I take to be a prudent old fellow, who have got money to lend. I am blockhead enough to give fifty per cent sooner than not have it; and you, I presume, are rogue enough to take a hundred if you can get it. Now, sir, you see we are acquainted at once, and may proceed to business without farther ceremony.

*Sir Oliv.* Exceeding frank, upon my word. I see, sir, you are not a man of many compliments.

*Chas. Surf.* Oh, no, sir! plain dealing in business I always think best.

*Sir Oliv.* Sir, I like you the better for it. However, you are mistaken in one thing; I have no money to lend, but I believe I could procure some of a friend; but then he's an unconscionable dog. Isn't he, Moses? And must sell stock to accommodate you. Mustn't he, Moses?

*Mos.* Yes, indeed! You know I always speak the truth, and scorn to tell a lie!

*Chas. Surf.* Right. People that speak truth generally do. But these are trifles, Mr. Premium. What! I know money isn't to be bought without paying for't!

*Sir Oliv.* Well, but what security could you give? You have no land, I suppose?

*Chas. Surf.* Not a mole-hill, nor a twig, but what's in the bough-pots[1] out of the window!

*Sir Oliv.* Nor any stock, I presume?

*Chas. Surf.* Nothing but live stock—and that's only a few pointers and ponies. But pray, Mr. Premium, are you acquainted at all with any of my connections?

*Sir Oliv.* Why, to say truth, I am.

*Chas. Surf.* Then you must know that I have a devilish rich uncle in the East Indies, Sir Oliver Surface, from whom I have the greatest expectations?

*Sir Oliv.* That you have a wealthy uncle, I have heard; but how your expectations will turn out is more, I believe, than you can tell.

*Chas. Surf.* Oh, no!—there can be no doubt. They tell me I'm a prodigious favourite, and that he talks of leaving me every thing.

*Sir Oliv.* Indeed! this is the first I've heard of it.

*Chas. Surf.* Yes, yes, 'tis just so. Moses knows 'tis true; don't you, Moses?

*Mos.* Oh, yes! I'll swear to't.

*Sir Oliv.* [*aside*]. Egad, they'll persuade me presently I'm at Bengal.

*Chas. Surf.* Now I propose, Mr. Premium, if it's agreeable to you, a post-obit on Sir Oliver's life: though at the same time the old fellow has been so liberal to me, that I give you my word, I should be very sorry to hear that anything had happened to him.

*Sir Oliv.* Not more than I should, I assure you. But the bond you mention happens to be just the worst security you could offer me—for I might live to a hundred and never see the principal.

*Chas. Surf.* Oh, yes, you would! the moment Sir Oliver dies, you know, you would come on me for the money.

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[1] bough-pots: flower-pots.

*Sir. Oliv.* Then I believe I should be the most unwelcome dun you ever had in your life.

*Chas. Surf.* What! I suppose you're afraid that Sir Oliver is too good a life?

*Sir Oliv.* No, indeed I am not; though I have heard he is as hale and healthy as any man of his years in Christendom.

*Chas. Surf.* There again, now, you are misinformed. No, no, the climate has hurt him considerably, poor uncle Oliver. Yes, yes, he breaks apace, I'm told—and is so much altered lately that his nearest relations would not know him.

*Sir Oliv.* No! Ha! ha! ha! so much altered lately that his nearest relations would not know him! Ha! ha! ha! egad—ha! ha! ha!

*Chas. Surf.* Ha! ha!—you're glad to hear that, little Premium?

*Sir Oliv.* No, no, I'm not.

*Chas. Surf.* Yes, yes, you are—ha! ha! ha!—you know that mends your chance.

*Sir Oliv.* But I'm told Sir Oliver is coming over; nay, some say he is actually arrived.

*Chas. Surf.* Pshaw! sure I must know better than you whether he's come or not. No, no, rely on't he's at this moment at Calcutta. Isn't he, Moses?

*Mos.* Oh, yes, certainly.

*Sir Oliv.* Very true, as you say, you must know better than I, though I have it from pretty good authority. Haven't I, Moses?

*Mos.* Yes, most undoubted!

*Sir Oliv.* But, sir, as I understand you want a few hundreds immediately, is there nothing you could dispose of?

*Chas. Surf.* How do you mean?

*Sir Oliv.* For instance, now, I have heard that your father left behind him a great quantity of massy old plate.

*Chas. Surf.* O Lud! that's gone long ago. Moses can tell you how better than I can.

*Sir Oliv.* [*aside*]. Good lack! all the family race-cups and corporation-bowls[1]!—[*Aloud.*] Then it was also supposed that his library was one of the most valuable and compact.

*Chas. Surf.* Yes, yes, so it was—vastly too much so for a private gentleman. For my part, I was always of a communicative disposition, so I thought it a shame to keep so much knowledge to myself.

*Sir Oliv.* [*aside*]. Mercy upon me! learning that had run in the family like an heir-loom!—[*Aloud.*] Pray, what are become of the books?

*Chas. Surf.* You must inquire of the auctioneer, Master Premium, for I don't believe even Moses can direct you.

*Mos.* I know nothing of books.

*Sir Oliv.* So, so, nothing of the family property left, I suppose?

*Chas. Surf.* Not much, indeed; unless you have a mind to the family pictures. I have got a room full of ancestors above; and if you have a taste for old paintings, egad, you shall have 'em a bargain!

*Sir Oliv.* Hey! what the devil! sure, you wouldn't sell your forefathers, would you?

*Chas. Surf.* Every man of them, to the best bidder.

*Sir Oliv.* What! your great-uncles and aunts?

*Chas. Surf.* Ay, and my great-grandfathers and grandmothers too.

*Sir Oliv.* [*aside*]. Now I give him up!—[*Aloud.*] What the plague, have you no bowels for your own kindred? Odds life! do you take me for Shylock in the play, that you would raise money of me on your own flesh and blood?

*Chas. Surf.* Nay, my little broker, don't be angry: what need you care, if you have your money's worth?

*Sir Oliv.* Well, I'll be the purchaser: I think I can dispose of the family canvas.—[*Aside.*] Oh, I'll never forgive him this! never!

*Reënter* CARELESS

*Care.* Come, Charles, what keeps you?

*Chas. Surf.* I can't come yet. I' faith, we are going to have a sale above stairs; here's little Premium will buy all my ancestors!

*Care.* Oh, burn your ancestors!

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[1] corporation-bowls: racing trophies and bowls received as presents from the city.

*Chas. Surf.* No, he may do that afterwards, if he pleases. Stay, Careless, we want you: egad, you shall be auctioneer—so come along with us.

*Care.* Oh, have with you, if that's the case. I can handle a hammer as well as a dice-box! Going! going!

*Sir Oliv.* [*aside*]. Oh, the profligates!

*Chas. Surf.* Come, Moses, you shall be appraiser, if we want one. Gad's life, little Premium, you don't seem to like the business?

*Sir Oliv.* Oh, yes, I do, vastly! Ha! ha! ha! yes, yes, I think it a rare joke to sell one's family by auction—ha! ha!—[*Aside.*] Oh, the prodigal!

*Chas. Surf.* To be sure! when a man wants money, where the plague should he get assistance, if he can't make free with his own relations! [*Exeunt*

*Sir Oliv.* I'll never forgive him; never! never!

## ACT IV

### Scene I

*A Picture Room in Charles Surface's House*

*Enter* Charles Surface, Sir Oliver Surface, Moses, *and* Careless

*Chas. Surf.* Walk in, gentlemen, pray walk in;—here they are, the family of the Surfaces, up to the Conquest.

*Sir Oliv.* And, in my opinion, a goodly collection.

*Chas. Surf.* Ay, ay, these are done in the true spirit of portrait-painting; no *volontière grace*[1] or expression. Not like the works of your modern Raphaels, who give you the strongest resemblance, yet contrive to make your portrait independent of you; so that you may sink the original and not hurt the picture. No, no; the merit of these is the inveterate likeness—all stiff and awkward as the originals, and like nothing in human nature besides.

*Sir Oliv.* Ah! we shall never see such figures of men again.

*Chas. Surf.* I hope not. Well, you see, Master Premium, what a domestic character I am; here I sit of an evening surrounded by my family. But come, get to your pulpit, Mr. Auctioneer; here's an old gouty chair of my grandfather's will answer the purpose.

*Care.* Ay, ay, this will do. But, Charles, I haven't a hammer; and what's an auctioneer without his hammer?

*Chas. Surf.* Egad, that's true. What parchment have we here? Oh, our genealogy in full. [*Taking pedigree down.*] Here, Careless, you shall have no common bit of mahogany, here's the family tree for you, you rogue! This shall be your hammer, and now you may knock down my ancestors with their own pedigree.

*Sir Oliv.* [*aside*]. What an unnatural rogue!—an *ex post facto*[2] parricide!

*Care.* Yes, yes, here's a list of your generation indeed;—faith, Charles, this is the most convenient thing you could have found for the business, for 'twill not only serve as a hammer, but a catalogue into the bargain. Come, begin—A-going, a-going, a-going!

*Chas. Surf.* Bravo, Careless! Well, here's my great-uncle, Sir Richard Raveline, a marvellous good general in his day, I assure you. He served in all the Duke of Marlborough's wars, and got that cut over his eye at the battle of Malplaquet.[3] What say you, Mr. Premium? look at him—there's a hero! not cut out of his feathers, as your modern clipped captains are, but enveloped in wig and regimentals, as a general should be. What do you bid?

*Sir Oliv.* [*aside to* Moses]. Bid him speak.

*Mos.* Mr. Premium would have you speak.

*Chas. Surf.* Why, then, he shall have him for ten pounds, and I'm sure that's not dear for a staff-officer.

*Sir Oliv.* [*aside*]. Heaven deliver me! his famous uncle Richard for ten pounds!—[*Aloud.*] Very well, sir, I take him at that.

*Chas. Surf.* Careless, knock down my uncle Richard.—Here, now, is a maiden sister of his, my great-aunt Deborah, done by Kneller,[1] in his best manner, and esteemed a very formidable likeness. There she is, you see, a shepherdess feeding her flock. You shall have her for five pounds ten—the sheep are worth the money.

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[1] volontière grace: Bad French; apparently meaning *naturalness*.

[2] ex . . . facto: after the deed is done; retroactive.

[3] battle . . . Malplaquet: in 1708.

*Sir Oliv.* [*aside*]. Ah! poor Deborah! a woman who set such a value on herself!—[*Aloud.*] Five pounds ten—she's mine.

*Chas. Surf.* Knock down my aunt Deborah! Here, now, are two that were a sort of cousins of theirs.—You see, Moses, these pictures were done some time ago, when beaux wore wigs, and the ladies their own hair.

*Sir Oliv.* Yes, truly, head-dresses appear to have been a little lower in those days.

*Chas. Surf.* Well, take that couple for the same.

*Mos.* 'Tis a good bargain.

*Chas. Surf.* Careless!—This, now, is a grandfather of my mother's, a learned judge, well known on the western circuit.—What do you rate him at, Moses?

*Mos.* Four guineas.

*Chas. Surf.* Four guineas! Gad's life, you don't bid me the price of his wig.—Mr. Premium, you have more respect for the woolsack;[2] do let us knock his lordship down at fifteen.

*Sir Oliv.* By all means.

*Care.* Gone!

*Chas. Surf.* And there are two brothers of his, William and Walter Blunt, Esquires, both members of parliament, and noted speakers; and, what's very extraordinary, I believe, this is the first time they were ever bought or sold.

*Sir Oliv.* That is very extraordinary, indeed! I'll take them at your own price, for the honour of parliament.

*Care.* Well said, little Premium! I'll knock them down at forty.

*Chas. Surf.* Here's a jolly fellow—I don't know what relation, but he was mayor of Norwich: take him at eight pounds.

*Sir Oliv.* No, no; six will do for the mayor.

*Chas. Surf.* Come, make it guineas, and I'll throw you the two aldermen there into the bargain.

*Sir Oliv.* They're mine.

*Chas. Surf.* Careless, knock down the mayor and aldermen. But, plague on't! we shall be all day retailing in this manner; do let us deal wholesale: what say you, little Premium? Give me three hundred pounds for the rest of the family in the lump.

*Care.* Ay, ay, that will be the best way.

*Sir Oliv.* Well, well, any thing to accommodate you; they are mine. But there is one portrait which you have always passed over.

*Care.* What, that ill-looking little fellow over the settee.

*Sir Oliv.* Yes, sir, I mean that; though I don't think him so ill-looking a little fellow, by any means.

*Chas. Surf.* What, that? Oh; that's my uncle Oliver! 'twas done before he went to India.

*Care.* Your uncle Oliver! Gad, then you'll never be friends, Charles. That, now, to me, is as stern a looking rogue as ever I saw; an unforgiving eye, and a disinheriting countenance! an inveterate knave, depend on't. Don't you think so, little Premium?

*Sir Oliv.* Upon my soul, sir, I do not; I think it is as honest a looking face as any in the room, dead or alive. But I suppose uncle Oliver goes with the rest of the lumber?

*Chas. Surf.* No, hang it! I'll not part with poor Noll. The old fellow has been very good to me, and, egad, I'll keep his picture while I've a room to put it in.

*Sir Oliv.* [*aside*]. The rogue's my nephew after all!—[*Aloud.*] But, sir, I have somehow taken a fancy to that picture.

*Chas. Surf.* I'm sorry for't, for you certainly will not have it. Oons, haven't you got enough of them?

*Sir Oliv.* [*aside*]. I forgive him every thing!—[*Aloud.*] But, sir, when I take a whim in my head, I don't value money. I'll give you as much for that as for all the rest.

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[1] **Kneller:** a famous portrait painter (1646–1723).

[2] **woolsack:** on which the Lord Chancellor sits in the House of Lords.

*Chas. Surf.* Don't tease me, master broker; I tell you I'll not part with it, and there's an end of it.

*Sir Oliv.* [*aside*]. How like his father the dog is!—[*Aloud.*] Well, well, I have done.—[*Aside.*] I did not perceive it before, but I think I never saw such a striking resemblance.—[*Aloud.*] Here is a draft for your sum.

*Chas. Surf.* Why, 'tis for eight hundred pounds!

*Sir Oliv.* You will not let Sir Oliver go?

*Chas. Surf.* Zounds! no! I tell you, once more.

*Sir Oliv.* Then never mind the difference, we'll balance that another time. But give me your hand on the bargain; you are an honest fellow, Charles—I beg pardon, sir, for being so free.—Come, Moses.

*Chas. Surf.* Egad, this is a whimsical old fellow!—But hark'ee, Premium, you'll prepare lodgings for these gentlemen.

*Sir Oliv.* Yes, yes, I'll send for them in a day or two.

*Chas. Surf.* But hold; do now send a genteel conveyance for them, for, I assure you, they were most of them used to ride in their own carriages.

*Sir Oliv.* I will, I will—for all but Oliver.

*Chas. Surf.* Ay, all but the little nabob.[1]

*Sir Oliv.* You're fixed on that?

*Chas. Surf.* Peremptorily.

*Sir Oliv.* [*aside*]. A dear extravagant rogue!—[*Aloud.*] Good day!—Come, Moses.—[*Aside.*] Let me hear now who dares call him profligate.

[*Exit with* Moses

*Care.* Why, this is the oddest genius of the sort I ever met with!

*Chas. Surf.* Egad, he's the prince of brokers, I think. I wonder how the devil Moses got acquainted with so honest a fellow.—Ha! here's Rowley.—Do, Careless, say I'll join the company in a few moments.

*Care.* I will—but don't let that old blockhead persuade you to squander any of that money on old musty debts, or any such nonsense; for tradesmen, Charles, are the most exorbitant fellows.

*Chas. Surf.* Very true, and paying them is only encouraging them.

*Care.* Nothing else.

*Chas. Surf.* Ay, ay, never fear.—[*Exit* Careless.] So! this was an odd old fellow, indeed. Let me see, two-thirds of these five hundred and thirty odd pounds are mine by right. 'Fore heaven! I find one's ancestors are more valuable relations than I took them for!—Ladies and gentlemen, your most obedient and very grateful servant. [*Bows ceremoniously to the pictures.*]

*Enter* Rowley

Ha! old Rowley! egad, you are just come in time to take leave of your old acquaintance.

*Row.* Yes, I heard they were a-going. But I wonder you can have such spirits under so many distresses.

*Chas. Surf.* Why, there's the point! my distresses are so many, that I can't afford to part with my spirits; but I shall be rich and splenetic,[2] all in good time. However, I suppose you are surprised that I am not more sorrowful at parting with so many near relations; to be sure, 'tis very affecting, but you see they never move a muscle, so why should I?

*Row.* There's no making you serious a moment.

*Chas. Surf.* Yes, faith, I am so now. Here, my honest Rowley, here, get me this changed directly, and take a hundred pounds of it immediately to old Stanley.

*Row.* A hundred pounds! Consider only——

*Chas. Surf.* Gad's life, don't talk about it! poor Stanley's wants are pressing, and, if you don't make haste, we shall have some one call that has a better right to the money.

*Row.* Ah! there's the point! I never will cease dunning you with the old proverb——

*Chas. Surf.* *Be just before you're generous.*—Why, so I would if I could; but Justice is an old hobbling beldame, and I can't get her to keep pace with Generosity, for the soul of me.

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[1] **nabob**: The portrait of his uncle. *Nabob*, one who has made his fortune in India; *lit.*, a native viceroy.

[2] **splenetic**: ill-humored.

*Row.* Yet, Charles, believe me, one hour's reflection——

*Chas. Surf.* Ay, ay, it's very true; but, hark'ee Rowley, while I have, by Heaven I'll give; and now for hazard.[1]

[*Exeunt*

### Scene II

*Another Room in the Same*

*Enter* Sir Oliver Surface *and* Moses

*Mos.* Well, sir, I think, as Sir Peter said, you have seen Mr. Charles in high glory; 'tis great pity he's so extravagant.

*Sir Oliv.* True, but he would not sell my picture.

*Mos.* And loves wine and women so much.

*Sir Oliv.* But he would not sell my picture.

*Mos.* And games so deep.

*Sir Oliv.* But he would not sell my picture. Oh, here's Rowley.

*Enter* Rowley

*Row.* So, Sir Oliver, I find you have made a purchase——

*Sir Oliv.* Yes, yes, our young rake has parted with his ancestors like old tapestry.

*Row.* And here has he commissioned me to redeliver you part of the purchase money—I mean, though, in your necessitous character of old Stanley.

*Mos.* Ah! there is the pity of all; he is so charitable.

*Row.* And I left a hosier and two tailors in the hall, who, I'm sure, won't be paid, and this hundred would satisfy them.

*Sir Oliv.* Well, well, I'll pay his debts, and his benevolence too. But now I am no more a broker, and you shall introduce me to the elder brother as old Stanley.

*Row.* Not yet awhile; Sir Peter, I know, means to call there about this time.

*Enter* Trip

*Trip.* Oh, gentlemen, I beg pardon for not showing you out; this way—Moses, a word. [*Exit with* Moses

*Sir Oliv.* There's a fellow for you! Would you believe it, that puppy intercepted the Jew on our coming, and wanted to raise money before he got to his master!

*Row.* Indeed!

*Sir Oliv.* Yes, they are now planning an annuity business. Ah, Master Rowley, in my days servants were content with the follies of their masters, when they were worn a little threadbare; but now they have their vices, like their birthday clothes, with the gloss on.

[*Exeunt*

### Scene III

*A Library in Joseph Surface's House*

*Enter* Joseph Surface *and* Servant

*Jos. Surf.* No letter from Lady Teazle?

*Serv.* No, sir.

*Jos. Surf.* [*aside*]. I am surprised she has not sent, if she is prevented from coming. Sir Peter certainly does not suspect me. Yet I wish I may not lose the heiress, through the scrape I have drawn myself into with the wife; however, Charles's imprudence and bad character are great points in my favour. *Knocking without.*

*Serv.* Sir, I believe that must be Lady Teazle.

*Jos. Surf.* Hold! See whether it is or not, before you go to the door: I have a particular message for you if it should be my brother.

*Serv.* 'Tis her ladyship, sir; she always leaves her chair at the milliner's in the next street.

*Jos. Surf.* Stay, stay; draw that screen before the window—that will do;—my opposite neighbour is a maiden lady of so curious a temper.—[Servant *draws the screen, and exit.*] I have a difficult hand to play in this affair. Lady Teazle has lately suspected my views on Maria; but she must by no means be let into that secret,—at least, till I have her more in my power.

*Enter* Lady Teazle

*Lady Teaz.* What, sentiment in soliloquy now? Have you been very impatient? O Lud! don't pretend to look grave. I vow I couldn't come before.

---

[1] hazard: the dice.

*Jos. Surf.* O madam, punctuality is a species of constancy very unfashionable in a lady of quality.

*Places chairs, and sits after* Lady Teazle *is seated.*

*Lady Teaz.* Upon my word, you ought to pity me. Do you know Sir Peter is grown so ill-natured to me of late, and so jealous of Charles too—that's the best of the story, isn't it?

*Jos. Surf.* [*aside*]. I am glad my scandalous friends keep that up.

*Lady Teaz.* I am sure I wish he would let Maria marry him, and then perhaps he would be convinced; don't you, Mr. Surface?

*Jos. Surf.* [*aside*]. Indeed I do not.—[*Aloud.*] Oh, certainly I do! for then my dear Lady Teazle would also be convinced how wrong her suspicions were of my having any design on the silly girl.

*Lady Teaz.* Well, well, I'm inclined to believe you. But isn't it provoking, to have the most ill-natured things said of one? And there's my friend Lady Sneerwell has circulated I don't know how many scandalous tales of me, and all without any foundation too; that's what vexes me.

*Jos. Surf.* Ay, madam, to be sure, that is the provoking circumstance—without foundation; yes, yes, there's the mortification, indeed; for when a scandalous story is believed against one, there certainly is no comfort like the consciousness of having deserved it.

*Lady Teaz.* No, to be sure, then I'd forgive their malice; but to attack me, who am really so innocent, and who never say an ill-natured thing of any body—that is, of any friend; and then Sir Peter, too, to have him so peevish, and so suspicious, when I know the integrity of my own heart—indeed 'tis monstrous!

*Jos. Surf.* But, my dear Lady Teazle, 'tis your own fault if you suffer it. When a husband entertains a groundless suspicion of his wife, and withdraws his confidence from her, the original compact is broken, and she owes it to the honour of her sex to endeavour to outwit him.

*Lady Teaz.* Indeed! So that, if he suspects me without cause, it follows, that the best way of curing his jealousy is to give him reason for't?

*Jos. Surf.* Undoubtedly—for your husband should never be deceived in you: and in that case it becomes you to be frail in compliment to his discernment.

*Lady Teaz.* To be sure, what you say is very reasonable, and when the consciousness of my innocence——

*Jos. Surf.* Ah, my dear madam, there is the great mistake! 'tis this very conscious innocence that is of the greatest prejudice to you. What is it makes you negligent of forms, and careless of the world's opinion? why, the consciousness of your own innocence. What makes you thoughtless in your conduct, and apt to run into a thousand little imprudences? why, the consciousness of your own innocence. What makes you impatient of Sir Peter's temper, and outrageous at his suspicions? why, the consciousness of your innocence.

*Lady Teaz.* 'Tis very true!

*Jos. Surf.* Now, my dear Lady Teazle, if you would but once make a trifling *faux pas*,[1] you can't conceive how cautious you would grow, and how ready to humour and agree with your husband.

*Lady Teaz.* Do you think so?

*Jos. Surf.* Oh, I am sure on't; and then you would find all scandal would cease at once, for—in short, your character at present is like a person in a plethora, absolutely dying from too much health.

*Lady Teaz.* So, so; then I perceive your prescription is, that I must sin in my own defence, and part with my virtue to preserve my reputation?

*Jos. Surf.* Exactly so, upon my credit, ma'am.

*Lady Teaz.* Well, certainly this is the oddest doctrine, and the newest receipt for avoiding calumny!

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[1] **faux pas:** false step.

*Jos. Surf.* An infallible one, believe me. Prudence, like experience, must be paid for.

*Lady Teaz.* Why, if my understanding were once convinced——

*Jos. Surf.* Oh, certainly, madam, your understanding should be convinced. Yes, yes—Heaven forbid I should persuade you to do any thing you thought wrong. No, no, I have too much honour to desire it.

*Lady Teaz.* Don't you think we may as well leave honour out of the argument?

*Rises.*

*Jos. Surf.* Ah, the ill effects of your country education, I see, still remain with you.

*Lady Teaz.* I doubt they do indeed; and I will fairly own to you, that if I could be persuaded to do wrong, it would be by Sir Peter's ill usage sooner than your honourable logic, after all.

*Jos. Surf.* Then, by this hand, which he is unworthy of——[*Taking her hand.*]

*Reënter* SERVANT

'Sdeath, you blockhead—what do you want?

*Serv.* I beg your pardon, sir, but I thought you would not choose Sir Peter to come up without announcing him.

*Jos. Surf.* Sir Peter!—Oons—the devil!

*Lady Teaz.* Sir Peter! O Lud! I'm ruined! I'm ruined!

*Serv.* Sir, 'twasn't I let him in.

*Lady Teaz.* Oh! I'm quite undone! What will become of me? Now, Mr. Logic—Oh! mercy, sir, he's on the stairs—I'll get behind here—and if ever I'm so imprudent again——

*Goes behind the screen.*

*Jos. Surf.* Give me that book.

*Sits down.* SERVANT *pretends to adjust his chair.*

*Enter* SIR PETER TEAZLE

*Sir Pet.* Ay, ever improving himself—Mr. Surface, Mr. Surface——

*Pats* JOSEPH *on the shoulder.*

*Jos. Surf.* Oh, my dear Sir Peter, I beg your pardon.—[*Gaping, throws away the book.*] I have been dozing over a stupid book. Well, I am much obliged to you for this call. You haven't been here, I believe, since I fitted up this room. Books, you know, are the only things I am a coxcomb in.

*Sir Pet.* 'Tis very neat indeed. Well, well, that's proper; and you can make even your screen a source of knowledge—hung, I perceive, with maps.

*Jos. Surf.* Oh, yes, I find great use in that screen.

*Sir Pet.* I dare say you must, certainly, when you want to find any thing in a hurry.

*Jos. Surf.* [*aside*]. Ay, or to hide any thing in a hurry either.

*Sir Pet.* Well, I have a little private business——

*Jos. Surf.* [*to* SERVANT.] You need not stay.

*Serv.* No, sir. [*Exit*

*Jos. Surf.* Here's a chair, Sir Peter—I beg——

*Sir Pet.* Well, now we are alone, there is a subject, my dear friend, on which I wish to unburden my mind to you—a point of the greatest moment to my peace; in short, my good friend, Lady Teazle's conduct of late has made me very unhappy.

*Jos. Surf.* Indeed! I am very sorry to hear it.

*Sir Pet.* 'Tis but too plain she has not the least regard for me; but, what's worse, I have pretty good authority to suppose she has formed an attachment to another.

*Jos. Surf.* Indeed! you astonish me!

*Sir Pet.* Yes! and, between ourselves, I think I've discovered the person.

*Jos. Surf.* How! you alarm me exceedingly.

*Sir Pet.* Ay, my dear friend, I knew you would sympathise with me!

*Jos. Surf.* Yes, believe me, Sir Peter, such a discovery would hurt me just as much as it would you.

*Sir Pet.* I am convinced of it. Ah! it is a happiness to have a friend whom we can trust even with one's family secrets. But have you no guess who I mean?

*Jos. Surf.* I haven't the most distant idea. It can't be Sir Benjamin Backbite!

*Sir. Pet.* Oh, no! What say you to Charles?

*Jos. Surf.* My brother! impossible!

*Sir Pet.* Oh, my dear friend, the goodness of your own heart misleads you. You judge of others by yourself.

*Jos. Surf.* Certainly, Sir Peter, the heart that is conscious of its own integrity is ever slow to credit another's treachery.

*Sir Pet.* True; but your brother has no sentiment—you never hear him talk so.

*Jos. Surf.* Yet I can't but think Lady Teazle herself has too much principle.

*Sir Pet.* Ay; but what is principle against the flattery of a handsome, lively young fellow?

*Jos. Surf.* That's very true.

*Sir Pet.* And then, you know, the difference of our ages makes it very improbable that she should have any great affection for me; and if she were to be frail, and I were to make it public, why the town would only laugh at me, the foolish old bachelor, who had married a girl.

*Jos. Surf.* That's true, to be sure—they would laugh.

*Sir Pet.* Laugh! ay, and make ballads, and paragraphs, and the devil knows what of me.

*Jos. Surf.* No, you must never make it public.

*Sir Pet.* But then again—that the nephew of my old friend, Sir Oliver, should be the person to attempt such a wrong, hurts me more nearly.

*Jos. Surf.* Ay, there's the point. When ingratitude barbs the dart of injury, the wound has double danger in it.

*Sir Pet.* Ay—I, that was, in a manner, left his guardian; in whose house he had been so often entertained; who never in my life denied him—my advice!

*Jos. Surf.* Oh, 'tis not to be credited! There may be a man capable of such baseness, to be sure; but, for my part, till you can give me positive proofs, I cannot but doubt it. However, if it should be proved on him, he is no longer a brother of mine—I disclaim kindred with him: for the man who can break the laws of hospitality, and tempt the wife of his friend, deserves to be branded as the pest of society.

*Sir Pet.* What a difference there is between you! What noble sentiments!

*Jos. Surf.* Yet I cannot suspect Lady Teazle's honour.

*Sir Pet.* I am sure I wish to think well of her, and to remove all ground of quarrel between us. She has lately reproached me more than once with having made no settlement on her; and in our last quarrel, she almost hinted that she should not break her heart if I was dead. Now, as we seem to differ in our ideas of expense, I have resolved she shall have her own way, and be her own mistress in that respect for the future; and, if I were to die, she will find I have not been inattentive to her interest while living. Here, my friend, are the drafts of two deeds, which I wish to have your opinion on. By one, she will enjoy eight hundred a year independent while I live and, by the other, the bulk of my fortune at my death.

*Jos. Surf.* This conduct, Sir Peter, is indeed truly generous.—[*Aside.*] I wish it may not corrupt my pupil.

*Sir Pet.* Yes, I am determined she shall have no cause to complain, though I would not have her acquainted with the latter instance of my affection yet awhile.

*Jos. Surf.* [*aside*]. Nor I, if I could help it.

*Sir Pet.* And now, my dear friend, if you please, we will talk over the situation of your hopes with Maria.

*Jos. Surf.* [*softly*]. Oh, no, Sir Peter; another time, if you please.

*Sir Pet.* I am sensibly chagrined at the little progress you seem to make in her affections.

*Jos. Surf.* [*softly*]. I beg you will not mention it. What are my disappointments when your happiness is in debate! —[*Aside.*] 'Sdeath, I shall be ruined every way!

*Sir Pet.* And though you are averse to my acquainting Lady Teazle with your passion, I'm sure she's not your enemy in the affair.

*Jos. Surf.* Pray, Sir Peter, now oblige me. I am really too much affected by the subject we have been speaking of to bestow a thought on my own concerns. The man who is entrusted with his friend's distresses can never——

*Reënter* Servant

Well, sir?

*Serv.* Your brother, sir, is speaking to a gentleman in the street, and says he knows you are within.

*Jos. Surf.* 'Sdeath, blockhead, I'm not within—I'm out for the day.

*Sir Pet.* Stay—hold—a thought has struck me:—you shall be at home.

*Jos. Surf.* Well, well, let him come up.—[*Exit* Servant.] [*Aside.*] He'll interrupt Sir Peter, however.

*Sir Pet.* Now, my good friend, oblige me, I entreat you. Before Charles comes let me conceal myself somewhere, then do you tax him on the point we have been talking, and his answer may satisfy me at once.

*Jos. Surf.* Oh, fie, Sir Peter! would you have me join in so mean a trick?—to trepan[1] my brother too?

*Sir Pet.* Nay, you tell me you are sure he is innocent; if so, you do him the greatest service by giving him an opportunity to clear himself, and you will set my heart at rest. Come, you shall not refuse me: [*going up,*] here, behind the screen will be—Hey! what the devil! there seems to be one listener here already—I'll swear I saw a petticoat!

*Jos. Surf.* Ha! ha! ha! Well, this is ridiculous enough. I'll tell you, Sir Peter, though I hold a man of intrigue to be a most despicable character, yet, you know, it does not follow that one is to be an absolute Joseph either! Hark'ee, 'tis a little French milliner, a silly rogue that plagues me; and having some character to lose, on your coming, sir, she ran behind the screen.

*Sir Pet.* Ah, Joseph! Joseph! Did I ever think that you——But, egad, she has overheard all I have been saying of my wife.

*Jos. Surf.* Oh, 'twill never go any farther, you may depend upon it!

*Sir Pet.* No! then, faith, let her hear it out.—Here's a closet will do as well.

*Jos. Surf.* Well, go in there.

*Sir Pet.* Sly rogue! sly rogue!

[*Goes into the closet*

*Jos. Surf.* A narrow escape, indeed! and a curious situation I'm in, to part man and wife in this manner.

*Lady Teaz.* [*peeping*]. Couldn't I steal off?

*Jos. Surf.* Keep close, my angel!

*Sir Pet.* [*peeping*]. Joseph, tax him home.

*Jos. Surf.* Back, my dear friend!

*Lady Teaz.* [*peeping*]. Couldn't you lock Sir Peter in?

*Jos. Surf.* Be still, my life!

*Sir Pet.* [*peeping*]. You're sure the little milliner won't blab?

*Jos. Surf.* In, in, my dear Sir Peter!—'Fore Gad, I wish I had a key to the door.

*Enter* Charles Surface

*Chas. Surf.* Holla! brother, what has been the matter? Your fellow would not let me up at first. What! have you had a Jew with you?

*Jos. Surf.* No, brother, I assure you.

*Chas. Surf.* But what has made Sir Peter steal off? I thought he had been with you.

*Jos. Surf.* He was, brother; but, hearing you were coming, he did not choose to stay.

*Chas. Surf.* What! was the old gentleman afraid I wanted to borrow money of him?

*Jos. Surf.* No, sir: but I am sorry to find, Charles, you have lately given that worthy man grounds for great uneasiness.

*Chas. Surf.* Yes, they tell me I do that to a great many worthy men. But how so, pray?

*Jos. Surf.* To be plain with you, brother, he thinks you are endeavouring to gain Lady Teazle's affections from him.

*Chas. Surf.* Who, I? O Lud! not I, upon my word.—Ha! ha! ha! ha! so the old fellow has found out that he has got a young wife, has he?—or, what is worse, Lady Teazle has found out she has an old husband?

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[1] trepan: snare.

*Jos. Surf.* This is no subject to jest on, brother. He who can laugh——

*Chas. Surf.* True, true, as you were going to say—then, seriously, I never had the least idea of what you charge me with, upon my honour.

*Jos. Surf.* [*raising his voice*]. Well, it will give Sir Peter great satisfaction to hear this.

*Chas. Surf.* To be sure, I once thought the lady seemed to have taken a fancy to me; but, upon my soul, I never gave her the least encouragement. Besides, you know my attachment to Maria.

*Jos. Surf.* But sure, brother, even if Lady Teazle had betrayed the fondest partiality for you——

*Chas. Surf.* Why, look'ee, Joseph, I hope I shall never deliberately do a dishonourable action; but if a pretty woman was purposely to throw herself in my way—and that pretty woman married to a man old enough to be her father——

*Jos. Surf.* Well!

*Chas. Surf.* Why, I believe I should be obliged to——

*Jos. Surf.* What?

*Chas. Surf.* To borrow a little of your morality, that's all. But, brother, do you know now that you surprise me exceedingly, by naming me with Lady Teazle; for, i' faith, I always understood you were her favourite.

*Jos. Surf.* Oh, for shame, Charles! This retort is foolish.

*Chas. Surf.* Nay, I swear I have seen you exchange such significant glances——

*Jos. Surf.* Nay, nay, sir, this is no jest.

*Chas. Surf.* Egad, I'm serious! Don't you remember one day, when I called here——

*Jos. Surf.* Nay, pr'ythee, Charles——

*Chas. Surf.* And found you together——

*Jos. Surf.* Zounds, sir, I insist——

*Chas. Surf.* And another time when your servant——

*Jos. Surf.* Brother, brother, a word with you!—[*Aside.*] Gad, I must stop him.

*Chas. Surf.* Informed, I say, that——

*Jos. Surf.* Hush! I beg your pardon, but Sir Peter has overheard all we have been saying. I knew you would clear yourself, or I should not have consented.

*Chas. Surf.* How, Sir Peter! Where is he?

*Jos. Surf.* Softly, there!

*Points to the closet.*

*Chas. Surf.* Oh, 'fore Heaven, I'll have him out. Sir Peter, come forth!

*Jos. Surf.* No, no——

*Chas. Surf.* I say, Sir Peter, come into court.—[*Pulls in* Sir Peter.] What! my old guardian!—What! turn inquisitor, and take evidence incog? Oh, fie! Oh, fie!

*Sir Pet.* Give me your hand, Charles —I believe I have suspected you wrongfully; but you mustn't be angry with Joseph—'twas my plan!

*Chas. Surf.* Indeed!

*Sir Pet.* But I acquit you. I promise you I don't think near so ill of you as I did: what I have heard has given me great satisfaction.

*Chas. Surf.* Egad, then, 'twas lucky you didn't hear any more. Wasn't it, Joseph?

*Sir Pet.* Ah! you would have retorted on him.

*Chas. Surf.* Ah, ay, that was a joke.

*Sir Pet.* Yes, yes, I know his honour too well.

*Chas. Surf.* But you might as well have suspected him as me in this matter, for all that. Mightn't he, Joseph?

*Sir Pet.* Well, well, I believe you.

*Jos. Surf.* [*aside*]. Would they were both out of the room!

*Sir Pet.* And in future, perhaps, we may not be such strangers.

*Reënter* Servant, *and whispers* Joseph Surface

*Serv.* Lady Sneerwell is below, and says she will come up.

*Jos. Surf.* Lady Sneerwell! Gad's life! she must not come here. [*Exit* Servant.] Gentlemen, I beg pardon—I must wait on you down stairs: here is a person come on particular business.

*Chas. Surf.* Well, you can see him in another room. Sir Peter and I have not met in a long time, and I have something to say to him.

*Jos. Surf.* [*aside*]. They must not be left together.—[*Aloud.*] I'll send Lady Sneerwell away, and return directly.—[*Aside to* SIR PETER.] Sir Peter, not a word of the French milliner.

*Sir Pet.* [*aside to* JOSEPH SURFACE]. I! not for the world!—[*Exit* JOSEPH SURFACE.] Ah, Charles, if you associated more with your brother, one might indeed hope for your reformation. He is a man of sentiment. Well, there is nothing in the world so noble as a man of sentiment.

*Chas. Surf.* Pshaw! he is too moral by half; and so apprehensive of his good name, as he calls it.

*Sir Pet.* No, no,—come, come,—you wrong him. No, no! Joseph is no rake, but he is no such saint either, in that respect.—[*Aside.*] I have a great mind to tell him—we should have such a laugh at Joseph.

*Chas. Surf.* Oh, hang him! he's a very anchorite, a young hermit!

*Sir Pet.* Hark'ee—you must not abuse him: he may chance to hear of it again, I promise you.

*Chas. Surf.* Why, you won't tell him?

*Sir Pet.* No—but—this way.—[*Aside.*] Egad, I'll tell him.—[*Aloud.*] Hark'ee—have you a mind to have a good laugh at Joseph?

*Chas. Surf.* I should like it of all things.

*Sir Pet.* Then, i' faith, we will! I'll be quit with him for discovering me. [*Whispers.*] He had a girl with him when I called.

*Chas. Surf.* What! Joseph! you jest.

*Sir Pet.* Hush!—a little French milliner—and the best of the jest is—she's in the room now.

*Chas. Surf.* The devil she is!

*Sir Pet.* Hush! I tell you. [*Points to the screen.*]

*Chas. Surf.* Behind the screen! 'Slife, let's unveil her!

*Sir Pet.* No, no, he's coming:—you sha'n't, indeed!

*Chas. Surf.* Oh, egad, we'll have a peep at the little milliner!

*Sir Pet.* Not for the world!—Joseph will never forgive me.

*Chas. Surf.* I'll stand by you——

*Sir Pet.* Odds, here he is!

CHARLES SURFACE *throws down the screen.*

*Reënter* JOSEPH SURFACE

*Chas. Surf.* Lady Teazle, by all that's wonderful.

*Sir Pet.* Lady Teazle, by all that's damnable!

*Chas. Surf.* Sir Peter, this is one of the smartest French milliners I ever saw. Egad, you seem all to have been diverting yourselves here at hide and seek, and I don't see who is out of the secret. Shall I beg your ladyship to inform me? Not a word!—Brother, will you be pleased to explain this matter? What! is Morality dumb too?—Sir Peter, though I found you in the dark, perhaps you are not so now! All mute!—Well—though I can make nothing of the affair, I suppose you perfectly understand one another; so I'll leave you to yourselves.—[*Going.*] Brother, I'm sorry to find you have given that worthy man grounds for so much uneasiness.—Sir Peter! there's nothing in the world so noble as a man of sentiment! [*Exit*

*Jos. Surf.* Sir Peter—notwithstanding—I confess—that appearances are against me—if you will afford me your patience—I make no doubt—but I shall explain every thing to your satisfaction.

*Sir Pet.* If you please, sir.

*Jos. Surf.* The fact is, sir, that Lady Teazle, knowing my pretensions to your ward Maria—I say, sir, Lady Teazle, being apprehensive of the jealousy of your temper—and knowing my friendship to the family—she, sir, I say—called here—in order that—I might explain these pretensions—but on your coming—being apprehensive—as I said—of your jealousy—she withdrew—and this, you may depend on it, is the whole truth of the matter.

*Sir Pet.* A very clear account, upon my word; and I dare swear the lady will vouch for every article of it.

*Lady Teaz.* For not one word of it, Sir Peter!

*Sir Pet.* How! don't you think it worth while to agree in the lie?

*Lady Teaz.* There is not one syllable of truth in what that gentleman has told you.

*Sir Pet.* I believe you, upon my soul, ma'am!

*Jos. Surf.* [*aside to* Lady Teazle]. 'Sdeath, madam, will you betray me?

*Lady Teaz.* Good Mr. Hypocrite, by your leave, I'll speak for myself.

*Sir Pet.* Ay, let her alone, sir; you'll find she'll make out a better story than you, without prompting.

*Lady Teaz.* Hear me, Sir Peter!—I came here on no matter relating to your ward, and even ignorant of this gentleman's pretensions to her. But I came, seduced by his insidious arguments, at least to listen to his pretended passion, if not to sacrifice your honour to his baseness.

*Sir Pet.* Now, I believe, the truth is coming, indeed!

*Jos. Surf.* The woman's mad!

*Lady Teaz.* No, sir; she has recovered her senses, and your own arts have furnished her with the means.—Sir Peter, I do not expect you to credit me—but the tenderness you expressed for me, when I am sure you could not think I was a witness to it, has so penetrated to my heart, that had I left the place without the shame of this discovery, my future life should have spoken the sincerity of my gratitude. As for that smooth-tongued hypocrite, who would have seduced the wife of his too credulous friend, while he affected honourable addresses to his ward—I behold him now in a light so truly despicable, that I shall never again respect myself for having listened to him. [*Exit*

*Jos. Surf.* Notwithstanding all this, Sir Peter, Heaven knows——

*Sir Pet.* That you are a villain! and so I leave you to your conscience.

*Jos. Surf.* You are too rash, Sir Peter; you shall hear me. The man who shuts out conviction by refusing to——

*Sir Pet.* Oh, damn your sentiments!

[*Exeunt* Sir Peter *and* Joseph Surface, *talking*

## ACT V

### Scene I

*The Library in Joseph Surface's House*

*Enter* Joseph Surface *and* Servant

*Jos. Surf.* Mr. Stanley! and why should you think I would see him you must know he comes to ask something.

*Serv.* Sir, I should not have let him in, but that Mr. Rowley came to the door with him.

*Jos. Surf.* Pshaw! blockhead! to suppose that I should now be in a temper to receive visits from poor relations!—Well, why don't you show the fellow up?

*Serv.* I will, sir.—Why, sir, it was not my fault that Sir Peter discovered my lady——

*Jos. Surf.* Go, fool!—[*Exit* Servant.] Sure Fortune never played a man of my policy such a trick before! My character with Sir Peter, my hopes with Maria, destroyed in a moment! I'm in a rare humour to listen to other people's distresses! I sha'n't be able to bestow even a benevolent sentiment on Stanley.—So! here he comes, and Rowley with him. I must try to recover myself, and put a little charity into my face, however. [*Exit*

*Enter* Sir Oliver Surface *and* Rowley

*Sir Oliv.* What! does he avoid us? That was he, was it not?

*Row.* It was, sir. But I doubt you are come a little too abruptly. His nerves are so weak, that the sight of a poor relation may be too much for him. I should have gone first to break it to him.

*Sir Oliv.* Oh, plague of his nerves! Yet this is he whom Sir Peter extols as a man of the most benevolent way of thinking!

*Row.* As to his way of thinking, I cannot pretend to decide; for, to do him justice, he appears to have as much speculative benevolence as any private gentleman in the kingdom, though he is seldom so sensual as to indulge himself in the exercise of it.

*Sir Oliv.* Yet he has a string of charitable sentiments at his fingers' ends.

*Row.* Or, rather, at his tongue's end, Sir Oliver; for I believe there is no sentiment he has such faith in as that *Charity begins at home.*

*Sir Oliv.* And his, I presume, is of that domestic sort which never stirs abroad at all.

*Row.* I doubt you'll find it so; but he's coming. I mustn't seem to interrupt you; and you know, immediately as you leave him, I come in to announce your arrival in your real character.

*Sir Oliv.* True; and afterwards you'll meet me at Sir Peter's.

*Row.* Without losing a moment.

[*Exit*

*Sir Oliv.* I don't like the complaisance of his features.

*Reënter* Joseph Surface

*Jos. Surf.* Sir, I beg you ten thousand pardons for keeping you a moment waiting.—Mr. Stanley, I presume.

*Sir Oliv.* At your service.

*Jos. Surf.* Sir, I beg you will do me the honour to sit down—I entreat you, sir.

*Sir Oliv.* Dear sir—there's no occasion.—[*Aside.*] Too civil by half!

*Jos. Surf.* I have not the pleasure of knowing you, Mr. Stanley; but I am extremely happy to see you look so well. You were nearly related to my mother, I think, Mr. Stanley?

*Sir Oliv.* I was, sir; so nearly that my present poverty, I fear, may do discredit to her wealthy children, else I should not have presumed to trouble you.

*Jos. Surf.* Dear sir, there needs no apology;—he that is in distress, though a stranger, has a right to claim kindred with the wealthy. I am sure I wish I was one of that class, and had it in my power to offer you even a small relief.

*Sir Oliv.* If your uncle, Sir Oliver, were here, I should have a friend.

*Jos. Surf.* I wish he was, sir, with all my heart: you should not want an advocate with him, believe me, sir.

*Sir Oliv.* I should not need one—my distresses would recommend me. But I imagined his bounty would enable you to become the agent of his charity.

*Jos. Surf.* My dear sir, you were strangely misinformed. Sir Oliver is a worthy man, a very worthy man; but avarice, Mr. Stanley, is the vice of age. I will tell you, my good sir, in confidence, what he has done for me has been a mere nothing; though people, I know, have thought otherwise, and for my part, I never chose to contradict the report.

*Sir Oliv.* What! has he never transmitted you bullion—rupees—pagodas?[1]

*Jos. Surf.* Oh, dear sir, nothing of the kind. No, no; a few presents now and then—china, shawls, congo tea, avadavats[2] and Indian crackers[3]—little more, believe me.

*Sir Oliv.* [*aside*]. Here's gratitude for twelve thousand pounds!—Avadavats and Indian crackers!

*Jos. Surf.* Then, my dear sir, you have heard, I doubt not, of the extravagance of my brother: there are very few would credit what I have done for that unfortunate young man.

*Sir Oliv.* [*aside*]. Not I, for one!

*Jos. Surf.* The sums I have lent him! Indeed I have been exceedingly to blame; it was an amiable weakness; however, I don't pretend to defend it—and now I feel it doubly culpable, since it has deprived me of the pleasure of serving you, Mr. Stanley, as my heart dictates.

*Sir Oliv.* [*aside*]. Dissembler!—[*Aloud.*] Then, sir, you can't assist me?

*Jos. Surf.* At present, it grieves me to say, I cannot; but, whenever I have the ability, you may depend upon hearing from me.

*Sir Oliv.* I am extremely sorry——

*Jos. Surf.* Not more than I, believe me; to pity, without the power to relieve, is still more painful than to ask and be denied.

*Sir Oliv.* Kind sir, your most obedient humble servant.

*Jos. Surf.* You leave me deeply affected, Mr. Stanley.—[*Calls to* Servant.] William, be ready to open the door.

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[1] rupees, pagodas: coins of India.

[2] avadavats: Indian song-birds.

[3] Indian crackers: fancy firecrackers.

*Sir Oliv.* Oh, dear sir, no ceremony.

*Jos. Surf.* Your very obedient.

*Sir Oliv.* Your most obsequious.

*Jos. Surf.* You may depend upon hearing from me whenever I can be of service.

*Sir Oliv.* Sweet sir, you are too good!

*Jos. Surf.* In the meantime I wish you health and spirits.

*Sir Oliv.* Your ever grateful and perpetual humble servant.

*Jos. Surf.* Sir, yours as sincerely.

*Sir Oliv.* [*aside*]. Now I am satisfied. [*Exit*

*Jos. Surf.* This is one bad effect of a good character; it invites application from the unfortunate, and there needs no small degree of address to gain the reputation of benevolence without incurring the expense. The silver ore of pure charity is an expensive article in the catalogue of a man's good qualities; whereas the sentimental French plate I use instead of it makes just as good a show, and pays no tax.

*Reënter* Rowley

*Row.* Mr. Surface, your servant: I was apprehensive of interrupting you, though my business demands immediate attention, as this note will inform you.

*Jos. Surf.* Always happy to see Mr. Rowley,—[*Aside.*] a rascal.—[*Reads the letter.*] Sir Oliver Surface!—My uncle arrived!

*Row.* He is, indeed: we have just parted—quite well, after a speedy voyage, and impatient to embrace his worthy nephew.

*Jos. Surf.* I am astonished!—[*Calls to* Servant.] William! stop Mr. Stanley, if he's not gone.

*Row.* Oh! he's out of reach, I believe.

*Jos. Surf.* Why did you not let me know this when you came in together?

*Row.* I thought you had particular business. But I must be gone to inform your brother, and appoint him here to meet your uncle. He will be with you in a quarter of an hour.

*Jos. Surf.* So he says. Well, I am strangely overjoyed at his coming.—[*Aside.*] Never, to be sure, was any thing so unlucky!

*Row.* You will be delighted to see how well he looks.

*Jos. Surf.* Oh! I'm overjoyed to hear it.—[*Aside.*] Just at this time!

*Row.* I'll tell him how impatiently you expect him.

*Jos. Surf.* Do, do; pray give my best duty and affection. Indeed, I cannot express the sensations I feel at the thought of seeing him.—[*Exit* Rowley.] Certainly his coming just at this time is the cruellest piece of ill fortune. [*Exit*

## Scene II

*A Room in Sir Peter Teazle's House*

*Enter* Mrs. Candour *and* Maid

*Maid.* Indeed, ma'am, my lady will see nobody at present.

*Mrs. Can.* Did you tell her it was her friend Mrs. Candour?

*Maid.* Yes, ma'am; but she begs you will excuse her.

*Mrs. Can.* Do go again; I shall be glad to see her, if it be only for a moment, for I am sure she must be in great distress.—[*Exit* Maid.] Dear heart, how provoking! I'm not mistress of half the circumstances! We shall have the whole affair in the newspapers, with the names of the parties at length, before I have dropped the story at a dozen houses.

*Enter* Sir Benjamin Backbite

Oh, dear Sir Benjamin! you have heard, I suppose——

*Sir Ben.* Of Lady Teazle and Mr. Surface——

*Mrs. Can.* And Sir Peter's discovery——

*Sir Ben.* Oh, the strangest piece of business, to be sure!

*Mrs. Can.* Well, I never was so surprised in my life. I am so sorry for all parties, indeed.

*Sir Ben.* Now, I don't pity Sir Peter at all: he was so extravagantly partial to Mr. Surface.

*Mrs. Can.* Mr. Surface! Why, 'twas with Charles Lady Teazle was detected.

*Sir Ben.* No, no, I tell you: Mr. Surface is the gallant.

*Mrs. Can.* No such thing! Charles is the man. 'Twas Mr. Surface brought Sir Peter on purpose to discover them.

*Sir Ben.* I tell you I had it from one——

*Mrs. Can.* And I have it from one——

*Sir Ben.* Who had it from one, who had it——

*Mrs. Can.* From one immediately. But here comes Lady Sneerwell; perhaps she knows the whole affair.

*Enter* LADY SNEERWELL

*Lady Sneer.* So, my dear Mrs. Candour, here's a sad affair of our friend Lady Teazle!

*Mrs. Can.* Ay, my dear friend, who would have thought——

*Lady Sneer.* Well, there is no trusting appearances; though, indeed, she was always too lively for me.

*Mrs. Can.* To be sure, her manners were a little too free; but then she was so young!

*Lady Sneer.* And had, indeed, some good qualities.

*Mrs. Can.* So she had, indeed. But have you heard the particulars?

*Lady Sneer.* No; but everybody says that Mr. Surface——

*Sir Ben.* Ay, there; I told you Mr. Surface was the man.

*Mrs. Can.* No, no: indeed it was Charles.

*Lady Sneer.* Charles! You alarm me, Mrs. Candour!

*Mrs. Can.* Yes, yes; he was the lover. Mr. Surface, to do him justice, was only the informer.

*Sir Ben.* Well, I'll not dispute with you, Mrs. Candour; but, be it which it may, I hope that Sir Peter's wound will not——

*Mrs. Can.* Sir Peter's wound! Oh, mercy! I didn't hear a word of their fighting.

*Lady Sneer.* Nor I, a syllable.

*Sir Ben.* No! what, no mention of the duel?

*Mrs. Can.* Not a word.

*Sir Ben.* Oh, yes: they fought before they left the room.

*Lady Sneer.* Pray, let us hear.

*Mrs. Can.* Ay, do oblige us with the duel.

*Sir Ben.* *Sir*, says Sir Peter, immediately after the discovery, *you are a most ungrateful fellow.*

*Mrs. Can.* Ay, to Charles——

*Sir Ben.* No, no—to Mr. Surface—*a most ungrateful fellow; and old as I am, sir*, says he, *I insist on immediate satisfaction.*

*Mrs. Can.* Ay, that must have been to Charles; for 'tis very unlikely Mr. Surface should fight in his own house.

*Sir Ben.* Gad's life, ma'am, not at all—*giving me immediate satisfaction.*—On this, ma'am, Lady Teazle, seeing Sir Peter in such danger, ran out of the room in strong hysterics, and Charles after her, calling out for hartshorn[1] and water; then, madam, they began to fight with swords——

*Enter* CRABTREE

*Crab.* With pistols, nephew, pistols! I have it from undoubted authority.

*Mrs. Can.* Oh, Mr. Crabtree, then it is all true!

*Crab.* Too true, indeed, madam, and Sir Peter is dangerously wounded——

*Sir Ben.* By a thrust in segoon[2] quite through his left side——

*Crab.* By a bullet lodged in the thorax.

*Mrs. Can.* Mercy on me! Poor Sir Peter!

*Crab.* Yes, madam; though Charles would have avoided the matter, if he could.

*Mrs. Can.* I told you who it was; I knew Charles was the person.

*Sir Ben.* My uncle, I see, knows nothing of the matter.

*Crab.* But Sir Peter taxed him with the basest ingratitude——

*Sir Ben.* That I told you, you know——

*Crab.* Do, nephew, let me speak!—and insisted on immediate——

*Sir Ben.* Just as I said——

*Crab.* Odds life, nephew, allow others to know something too! A pair of pistols lay on the bureau (for Mr. Surface, it seems, had come home the night before late from Salthill, where he had been to see the Montem[1] with a friend, who has a son at Eton), so, unluckily, the pistols were left charged.

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[1] hartshorn: smelling salts.

[2] segoon: *seconde;* a position in fencing.

*Sir Ben.* I heard nothing of this.

*Crab.* Sir Peter forced Charles to take one, and they fired, it seems, pretty nearly together. Charles's shot took effect, as I tell you, and Sir Peter's missed; but, what is very extraordinary, the ball struck against a little bronze Shakespeare that stood over the fireplace, grazed out of the window at a right angle, and wounded the postman, who was just coming to the door with a double letter from Northamptonshire.

*Sir Ben.* My uncle's account is more circumstantial, I confess; but I believe mine is the true one, for all that.

*Lady Sneer.* [*aside*]. I am more interested in this affair than they imagine, and must have better information.

[*Exit*

*Sir Ben.* Ah! Lady Sneerwell's alarm is very easily accounted for.

*Crab.* Yes, yes, they certainly do say—but that's neither here nor there.

*Mrs. Can.* But, pray, where is Sir Peter at present?

*Crab.* Oh! they brought him home, and he is now in the house, though the servants are ordered to deny him.

*Mrs. Can.* I believe so, and Lady Teazle, I suppose, attending him.

*Crab.* Yes, yes; and I saw one of the faculty[2] enter just before me.

*Sir Ben.* Hey! who comes here?

*Crab.* Oh, this is he: the physician, depend on't.

*Mrs. Can.* Oh, certainly! it must be the physician; and now we shall know.

*Enter* Sir Oliver Surface

*Crab.* Well, doctor, what hopes?

*Mrs. Can.* Ay, doctor, how's your patient?

*Sir Ben.* Now, doctor, isn't it a wound with a small-sword?

*Crab.* A bullet lodged in the thorax, for a hundred!

*Sir Oliv.* Doctor! a wound with a small-sword and a bullet in the thorax!—Oons! are you mad, good people?

*Sir Ben.* Perhaps, sir, you are not a doctor?

*Sir Oliv.* Truly, I am to thank you for my degree if I am.

*Crab.* Only a friend of Sir Peter's, then, I presume. But, sir, you must have heard of his accident?

*Sir Oliv.* Not a word!

*Crab.* Not of his being dangerously wounded?

*Sir Oliv.* The devil he is!

*Sir Ben.* Run through the body——

*Crab.* Shot in the breast——

*Sir Ben.* By one Mr. Surface——

*Crab.* Ay, the younger.

*Sir Oliv.* Hey! what the plague! you seem to differ strangely in your accounts: however, you agree that Sir Peter is dangerously wounded.

*Sir Ben.* Oh, yes, we agree in that.

*Crab.* Yes, yes, I believe there can be no doubt of that.

*Sir Oliv.* Then, upon my word, for a person in that situation, he is the most imprudent man alive; for here he comes, walking as if nothing at all was the matter.

*Enter* Sir Peter Teazle

Odds heart, Sir Peter! you are come in good time, I promise you; for we had just given you over!

*Sir Ben.* [*aside to* Crabtree]. Egad, uncle, this is the most sudden recovery!

*Sir Oliv.* Why, man! what do you out of bed with a small-sword through your body, and a bullet lodged in your thorax?

*Sir Pet.* A small-sword and a bullet!

*Sir Oliv.* Ay; these gentlemen would have killed you without law or physic, and wanted to dub me a doctor, to make me an accomplice.

*Sir Pet.* Why, what is all this?

*Sir Ben.* We rejoice, Sir Peter, that the story of the duel is not true, and are sincerely sorry for your other misfortune.

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[1] **Salthill . . . Montem:** *processus ad montem*, going to the hill: It was formerly the custom for scholars of Eton College to go every third year on Whit-Tuesday to Salt Hill near the Bath Road to ask for money for salt from passers-by in order to defray the expenses of the senior scholar.

[2] **faculty:** of medicine.

*Sir Pet.* [*aside*]. So, so; all over the town already!

*Crab.* Though, Sir Peter, you were certainly vastly to blame to marry at your years.

*Sir Pet.* Sir, what business is that of yours?

*Mrs. Can.* Though, indeed, as Sir Peter made so good a husband, he's very much to be pitied.

*Sir Pet.* Plague on your pity, ma'am! I desire none of it.

*Sir Ben.* However, Sir Peter, you must not mind the laughing and jests you will meet with on the occasion.

*Sir Pet.* Sir, sir! I desire to be master in my own house.

*Crab.* 'Tis no uncommon case, that's one comfort.

*Sir Pet.* I insist on being left to myself: without ceremony, I insist on your leaving my house directly!

*Mrs. Can.* Well, well, we are going; and depend on't, we'll make the best report of it we can. [*Exit*

*Sir Pet.* Leave my house!

*Crab.* And tell how hardly you've been treated. [*Exit*

*Sir Pet.* Leave my house!

*Sir Ben.* And how patiently you bear it. [*Exit*

*Sir Pet.* Fiends! vipers! furies! Oh! that their own venom would choke them.

*Sir Oliv.* They are very provoking indeed, Sir Peter.

*Enter* ROWLEY

*Row.* I heard high words: what has ruffled you, sir?

*Sir Pet.* Pshaw! what signifies asking? Do I ever pass a day without my vexations?

*Row.* Well, I'm not inquisitive.

*Sir Oliv.* Well, Sir Peter, I have seen both my nephews in the manner we proposed.

*Sir Pet.* A precious couple they are!

*Row.* Yes, and Sir Oliver is convinced that your judgment was right, Sir Peter.

*Sir Oliv.* Yes, I find Joseph is indeed the man, after all.

*Row.* Ay, as Sir Peter says, he is a man of sentiment.

*Sir Oliv.* And acts up to the sentiments he professes.

*Row.* It certainly is edification to hear him talk.

*Sir Oliv.* Oh, he's a model for the young men of the age!—but how's this, Sir Peter? you don't join us in your friend Joseph's praise, as I expected.

*Sir Pet.* Sir Oliver, we live in a wicked world, and the fewer we praise the better.

*Row.* What! do you say so, Sir Peter, who were never mistaken in your life?

*Sir Pet.* Pshaw! plague on you both! I see by your sneering you have heard the whole affair. I shall go mad among you!

*Row.* Then, to fret you no longer, Sir Peter, we are indeed acquainted with it all. I met Lady Teazle coming from Mr. Surface's so humbled that she deigned to request me to be her advocate with you.

*Sir Pet.* And does Sir Oliver know all this?

*Sir Oliv.* Every circumstance.

*Sir Pet.* What, of the closet and the screen, hey?

*Sir Oliv.* Yes, yes, and the little French milliner. Oh, I have been vastly diverted with the story! ha! ha! ha!

*Sir Pet.* 'Twas very pleasant.

*Sir Oliv.* I never laughed more in my life, I assure you: ah! ah! ah!

*Sir Pet.* Oh, vastly diverting! ha! ha! ha!

*Row.* To be sure, Joseph with his sentiments! ha! ha! ha!

*Sir Pet.* Yes, yes, his sentiments! ha ha! ha! Hypocritical villain!

*Sir Oliv.* Ay, and that rogue Charles to pull Sir Peter out of the closet: ha! ha! ha!

*Sir Pet.* Ha! ha! 'twas devilish entertaining, to be sure!

*Sir Oliv.* Ha! ha! ha! Egad, Sir Peter, I should like to have seen your face when the screen was thrown down: ha! ha!

*Sir Pet.* Yes, yes, my face when the screen was thrown down: ha! ha! ha! Oh, I must never show my head again!

*Sir Oliv.* But come, come, it isn't fair to laugh at you neither, my old friend; though, upon my soul, I can't help it.

*Sir Pet.* Oh, pray don't restrain your mirth on my account: it does not hurt me at all! I laugh at the whole affair myself. Yes, yes, I think being a standing jest for all one's acquaintance a very happy situation. Oh, yes, and then of a morning to read the paragraphs about Mr. S——, Lady T——, and Sir P——, will be so entertaining!

*Row.* Without affectation, Sir Peter, you may despise the ridicule of fools. But I see Lady Teazle going towards the next room; I am sure you must desire a reconciliation as earnestly as she does.

*Sir Oliv.* Perhaps my being here prevents her coming to you. Well, I'll leave honest Rowley to mediate between you; but he must bring you all presently to Mr. Surface's, where I am now returning, if not to reclaim a libertine, at least to expose hypocrisy.

*Sir Pet.* Ah, I'll be present at your discovering yourself there with all my heart; though 'tis a vile unlucky place for discoveries.

*Row.* We'll follow.

[*Exit* Sir Oliver Surface

*Sir Pet.* She is not coming here, you see, Rowley.

*Row.* No, but she has left the door of that room open, you perceive. See, she is in tears.

*Sir Pet.* Certainly a little mortification appears very becoming in a wife. Don't you think it will do her good to let her pine a little?

*Row.* Oh, this is ungenerous in you!

*Sir Pet.* Well, I know not what to think. You remember the letter I found of hers evidently intended for Charles?

*Row.* A mere forgery, Sir Peter! laid in your way on purpose. This is one of the points which I intend Snake shall give you conviction of.

*Sir Pet.* I wish I were once satisfied of that. She looks this way. What a remarkably elegant turn of the head she has! Rowley, I'll go to her.

*Row.* Certainly.

*Sir Pet.* Though, when it is known that we are reconciled, people will laugh at me ten times more.

*Row.* Let them laugh, and retort their malice only by showing them you are happy in spite of it.

*Sir Pet.* I' faith, so I will! and, if I'm not mistaken, we may yet be the happiest couple in the country.

*Row.* Nay, Sir Peter, he who once lays aside suspicion——

*Sir Pet.* Hold, Master Rowley! if you have any regard for me, never let me hear you utter anything like a sentiment: I have had enough of them to serve me the rest of my life. [*Exeunt*

## SCENE III

*The Library in Joseph Surface's House*

*Enter* JOSEPH SURFACE *and* LADY SNEERWELL

*Lady Sneer.* Impossible! Will not Sir Peter immediately be reconciled to Charles, and of course no longer oppose his union with Maria? The thought is distraction to me.

*Jos. Surf.* Can passion furnish a remedy?

*Lady Sneer.* No, nor cunning either. Oh, I was a fool, an idiot, to league with such a blunderer!

*Jos. Surf.* Sure, Lady Sneerwell, I am the greatest sufferer; yet you see I bear the accident with calmness.

*Lady Sneer.* Because the disappointment doesn't reach your heart; your interest only attached you to Maria. Had you felt for her what I have for that ungrateful libertine, neither your temper nor hypocrisy could prevent your showing the sharpness of your vexation.

*Jos. Surf.* But why should your reproaches fall on me for this disappointment?

*Lady Sneer.* Are you not the cause of it? Had you not a sufficient field for your roguery in imposing upon Sir Peter, and supplanting your brother, but you must endeavour to seduce his wife? I hate such an avarice of crimes; 'tis an unfair monopoly and never prospers.

*Jos. Surf.* Well, I admit I have been to blame. I confess I deviated from the direct road of wrong, but I don't think we're so totally defeated neither.

*Lady Sneer.* No!

*Jos. Surf.* You tell me you have made a trial of Snake since we met, and that you still believe him faithful to us?

*Lady Sneer.* I do believe so.

*Jos. Surf.* And that he has undertaken, should it be necessary, to swear and prove, that Charles is at this time contracted by vows and honour to your ladyship, which some of his former letters to you will serve to support?

*Lady Sneer.* This, indeed, might have assisted.

*Jos. Surf.* Come, come; it is not too late yet.—[*Knocking at the door.*] But hark! this is probably my uncle, Sir Oliver: retire to that room; we'll consult farther when he is gone.

*Lady Sneer.* Well, but if he should find you out too?

*Jos. Surf.* Oh, I have no fear of that. Sir Peter will hold his tongue for his own credit's sake—and you may depend on it I shall soon discover Sir Oliver's weak side!

*Lady Sneer.* I have no diffidence[1] of your abilities: only be constant to one roguery at a time.

*Jos. Surf.* I will, I will!—[*Exit* LADY SNEERWELL.] So! 'tis confounded hard, after such bad fortune, to be baited by one's confederate in evil. Well, at all events, my character is so much better than Charles's, that I certainly—hey!—what—this is not Sir Oliver, but old Stanley again. Plague on't that he should return to tease me just now! I shall have Sir Oliver come and find him here —and——

*Enter* SIR OLIVER SURFACE

Gad's life, Mr. Stanley, why have you come back to plague me at this time? You must not stay now, upon my word.

*Sir Oliv.* Sir, I hear your uncle Oliver is expected here, and though he has been so penurious to you, I'll try what he'll do for me.

*Jos. Surf.* Sir, 'tis impossible for you to stay now, so I must beg——Come any other time, and I promise you, you shall be assisted.

*Sir Oliv.* No: Sir Oliver and I must be acquainted.

*Jos. Surf.* Zounds, sir! then I insist on your quitting the room directly.

*Sir Oliv.* Nay, sir——

*Jos. Surf.* Sir, I insist on't!—Here, William! show this gentleman out. Since you compel me, sir, not one moment—this is such insolence.

[*Going to push him out*

*Enter* CHARLES SURFACE

*Chas. Surf.* Heyday! what's the matter now? What the devil, have you got hold of my little broker here? Zounds, brother, don't hurt little Premium. What's the matter, my little fellow?

*Jos. Surf.* So! he has been with you too, has he?

*Chas. Surf.* To be sure, he has. Why, he's as honest a little——But sure, Joseph, you have not been borrowing money too, have you?

*Jos. Surf.* Borrowing! no! But, brother, you know we expect Sir Oliver here every——

*Chas. Surf.* O Gad, that's true! Noll mustn't find the little broker here, to be sure.

*Jos. Surf.* Yet Mr. Stanley insists——

*Chas. Surf.* Stanley! why his name's Premium.

*Jos. Surf.* No, sir, Stanley.

*Chas. Surf.* No, no, Premium.

*Jos. Surf.* Well, no matter which—but——

*Chas. Surf.* Ay, ay, Stanley or Premium, 'tis the same thing, as you say; for I suppose he goes by half a hundred names, besides A. B. at the coffee-house. *Knocking.*

*Jos. Surf.* 'Sdeath! here's Sir Oliver at the door.—Now I beg, Mr. Stanley——

*Chas. Surf.* Ay, ay, and I beg, Mr. Premium——

*Sir Oliv.* Gentlemen——

*Jos. Surf.* Sir, by Heaven you shall go.

*Chas. Surf.* Ay, out with him, certainly!

*Sir Oliv.* This violence——

*Jos. Surf.* Sir, 'tis your own fault.

*Chas. Surf.* Out with him, to be sure.

[*Both forcing* SIR OLIVER *out*

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[1] diffidence: distrust.

*Enter* Sir Peter *and* Lady Teazle, Maria, *and* Rowley

*Sir Pet.* My old friend, Sir Oliver—hey! What in the name of wonder—here are dutiful nephews—assault their uncle at a first visit!

*Lady Teaz.* Indeed, Sir Oliver, 'twas well we came in to rescue you.

*Row.* Truly it was; for I perceive, Sir Oliver, the character of old Stanley was no protection to you.

*Sir Oliv.* Nor of Premium either: the necessities of the former could not extort a shilling from that benevolent gentleman; and with the other I stood a chance of faring worse than my ancestors, and being knocked down without being bid for.

*Jos. Surf.* Charles!

*Chas. Surf.* Joseph!

*Jos. Surf.* 'Tis now complete!

*Chas. Surf.* Very.

*Sir Oliv.* Sir Peter, my friend, and Rowley too—look on that elder nephew of mine. You know what he has already received from my bounty; and you also know how gladly I would have regarded half my fortune as held in trust for him: judge then my disappointment in discovering him to be destitute of truth, charity, and gratitude!

*Sir Pet.* Sir Oliver, I should be more surprised at this declaration, if I had not myself found him to be mean, treacherous, and hypocritical.

*Lady Teaz.* And if the gentleman pleads not guilty to these, pray let him call me to his character.

*Sir Pet.* Then, I believe, we need add no more: if he knows himself, he will consider it as the most perfect punishment, that he is known to the world.

*Chas. Surf.* [*aside*]. If they talk this way to Honesty, what will they say to me, by and by?

[Sir Peter, Lady Teazle, *and* Maria *retire*

*Sir Oliv.* As for that prodigal, his brother, there——

*Chas. Surf.* [*aside*]. Ay, now comes my turn: the family pictures will ruin me!

*Jos. Surf.* Sir Oliver—uncle, will you honour me with a hearing?

*Chas. Surf.* [*aside*]. Now, if Joseph would make one of his long speeches, I might recollect myself a little.

*Sir Oliv.* [*to* Joseph Surface]. I suppose you would undertake to justify yourself?

*Jos. Surf.* I trust I could.

*Sir Oliv.* [*to* Charles Surface]. Well, sir!—and you could justify yourself too, I suppose?

*Chas. Surf.* Not that I know of, Sir Oliver.

*Sir Oliv.* What!—Little Premium has been let too much into the secret, I suppose?

*Chas. Surf.* True, sir; but they were family secrets, and should not be mentioned again, you know.

*Row.* Come, Sir Oliver, I know you cannot speak of Charles's follies with anger.

*Sir Oliv.* Odds heart, no more I can; nor with gravity either. Sir Peter, do you know the rogue bargained with me for all his ancestors; sold me judges and generals by the foot, and maiden aunts as cheap as broken china.

*Chas. Surf.* To be sure, Sir Oliver, I did make a little free with the family canvas, that's the truth on't. My ancestors may rise in judgment against me, there's no denying it; but believe me sincere when I tell you—and upon my soul I would not say so if I was not—that if I do not appear mortified at the exposure of my follies, it is because I feel at this moment the warmest satisfaction in seeing you, my liberal benefactor.

*Sir Oliv.* Charles, I believe you. Give me your hand again: the ill-looking little fellow over the settee has made your peace.

*Chas. Surf.* Then, sir, my gratitude to the original is still increased.

*Lady Teaz.* [*advancing*]. Yet, I believe, Sir Oliver, here is one whom Charles is still more anxious to be reconciled to. [*Pointing to* Maria.]

*Sir Oliv.* Oh, I have heard of his attachment there; and, with the young lady's pardon, if I construe right—that blush——

*Sir Pet.* Well, child, speak your sentiments!

*Mar.* Sir, I have little to say, but that I shall rejoice to hear that he is happy; for me, whatever claim I had to his attention, I willingly resign to one who has a better title.

*Chas. Surf.* How, Maria!

*Sir Pet.* Heyday! what's the mystery now? While he appeared an incorrigible rake, you would give your hand to no one else; and now that he is likely to reform I'll warrant you won't have him!

*Mar.* His own heart and Lady Sneerwell know the cause.

*Chas. Surf.* Lady Sneerwell!

*Jos. Surf.* Brother, it is with great concern I am obliged to speak on this point, but my regard to justice compels me, and Lady Sneerwell's injuries can no longer be concealed.

*Opens the door.*

*Enter* LADY SNEERWELL

*Sir Pet.* So! another French milliner! Egad, he has one in every room in the house, I suppose!

*Lady Sneer.* Ungrateful Charles! Well may you be surprised, and feel for the indelicate situation your perfidy has forced me into.

*Chas. Surf.* Pray, uncle, is this another plot of yours? For, as I have life, I don't understand it.

*Jos. Surf.* I believe, sir, there is but the evidence of one person more necessary to make it extremely clear.

*Sir Pet.* And that person, I imagine, is Mr. Snake.—Rowley, you were perfectly right to bring him with us, and pray let him appear.

*Row.* Walk in, Mr. Snake.

*Enter* SNAKE

I thought his testimony might be wanted: however, it happens unluckily, that he comes to confront Lady Sneerwell, not to support her.

*Lady Sneer.* A villain! Treacherous to me at last! Speak, fellow, have you too conspired against me!

*Snake.* I beg your ladyship ten thousand pardons: you paid me extremely liberally for the lie in question; but I unfortunately have been offered double to speak the truth.

*Sir Pet.* Plot and counter-plot, egad!

*Lady Sneer.* The torments of shame and disappointment on you all!

[*Going*

*Lady Teaz.* Hold, Lady Sneerwell—before you go, let me thank you for the trouble you and that gentleman have taken, in writing letters from me to Charles, and answering them yourself; and let me also request you to make my respects to the scandalous college, of which you are president, and inform them, that Lady Teazle, licentiate,[1] begs leave to return the diploma they granted her, as she leaves off practice, and kills characters no longer.

*Lady Sneer.* You too, madam!—provoking—insolent! May your husband live these fifty years! [*Exit*

*Sir Pet.* Oons! what a fury!

*Lady Teaz.* A malicious creature, indeed!

*Sir Pet.* What! not for her last wish?

*Lady Teaz.* Oh, no!

*Sir Oliv.* Well, sir, and what have you to say now?

*Jos. Surf.* Sir, I am so confounded, to find that Lady Sneerwell could be guilty of suborning Mr. Snake in this manner, to impose on us all, that I know not what to say: however, lest her revengeful spirit should prompt her to injure my brother, I had certainly better follow her directly. For the man who attempts to—— [*Exit*

*Sir Pet.* Moral to the last!

*Sir Oliv.* Ay, and marry her, Joseph, if you can. Oil and vinegar!—egad you'll do very well together.

*Row.* I believe we have no more occasion for Mr. Snake at present?

*Snake.* Before I go, I beg pardon once for all, for whatever uneasiness I have been the humble instrument of causing to the parties present.

*Sir Pet.* Well, well, you have made atonement by a good deed at last.

*Snake.* But I must request of the company, that it shall never be known.

*Sir Pet.* Hey! what the plague! are you ashamed of having done a right thing once in your life?

---

[1] licentiate: graduate.

*Snake.* Ah, sir, consider—I live by the badness of my character; and, if it were once known that I had been betrayed into an honest action, I should lose every friend I have in the world.

*Sir Oliv.* Well, well—we'll not traduce you by saying any thing in your praise, never fear. [*Exit* SNAKE

*Sir Pet.* There's a precious rogue!

*Lady Teaz.* See, Sir Oliver, there needs no persuasion now to reconcile your nephew and Maria.

*Sir Oliv.* Ay, ay, that's as it should be, and, egad, we'll have the wedding to-morrow morning.

*Chas. Surf.* Thank you, dear uncle.

*Sir Pet.* What, you rogue! don't you ask the girl's consent first?

*Chas. Surf.* Oh, I have done that a long time—a minute ago—and she has looked yes.

*Mar.* For shame, Charles!—I protest, Sir Peter, there has not been a word——

*Sir Oliv.* Well, then, the fewer the better; may your love for each other never know abatement.

*Sir Pet.* And may you live as happily together as Lady Teazle and I intend to do!

*Chas. Surf.* Rowley, my old friend, I am sure you congratulate me; and I suspect that I owe you much.

*Sir Oliv.* You do, indeed, Charles.

*Sir Pet.* Ay, honest Rowley always said you would reform.

*Chas. Surf.* Why, as to reforming, Sir Peter, I'll make no promises, and that I take to be a proof that I intend to set about it. But here shall be my monitor—my gentle guide.—Ah! can I leave the virtuous path those eyes illumine?

Though thou, dear maid, shouldst waive thy beauty's sway,
Thou still must rule, because I will obey:
An humble fugitive from Folly view,
No sanctuary near but Love and you:
[*To the audience.*]
You can, indeed, each anxious fear remove,
For even Scandal dies, if you approve.
[*Exeunt omnes*

## EPILOGUE

BY MR. COLMAN[1]

SPOKEN BY LADY TEAZLE

I, who was late so volatile and gay,
Like a trade-wind must now blow all one way,
Bend all my cares, my studies, and my vows,
To one dull rusty weathercock—my spouse!
So wills our virtuous bard—the motley Bayes[2]
Of crying epilogues and laughing plays!
Old bachelors, who marry smart young wives,
Learn from our play to regulate your lives:
Each bring his dear to town, all faults upon her—
London will prove the very source of honour.
Plunged fairly in, like a cold bath it serves,
When principles relax, to brace the nerves:
Such is my case; and yet I must deplore
That the gay dream of dissipation's o'er.
And say, ye fair! was ever lively wife,
Born with a genius for the highest life,
Like me untimely blasted in her bloom,
Like me condemn'd to such a dismal doom?
Save money—when I just knew how to waste it!
Leave London—just as I began to taste it!
Must I then watch the early crowing cock,
The melancholy ticking of a clock;
In a lone rustic hall for ever pounded,[3]
With dogs, cats, rats, and squalling brats surrounded.
With humble curate can I now retire,
(While good Sir Peter boozes with the squire,)

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[1] **Mr. Colman:** Manager of the Haymarket Theatre.

[2] **Bayes:** laurels; see note on the last line of the *Epilogue* in *She Stoops to Conquer*, (page 428).

[3] **pounded:** impounded; penned up.

And at backgammon mortify my soul,
That pants for loo,[1] or flutters at a vole?[2]
Seven's the main![3] Dear sound that must expire,
Lost at hot cockles[4] round a Christmas fire;
The transient hour of fashion too soon spent,
Farewell the tranquil mind, farewell content!
Farewell the plumèd head, the cushioned tête,
That takes the cushion from its proper seat!
That spirit-stirring drum!—card drums[5] I mean,
Spadille—odd trick—pam—basto—king and queen![6]
And you, ye knockers, that, with brazen throat,
The welcome visitors' approach denote;
Farewell all quality of high renown,
Pride, pomp, and circumstance of glorious town!
Farewell! your revels I partake no more,
And Lady Teazle's occupation's o'er!
All this I told our bard; he smiled, and said 'twas clear,
I ought to play deep tragedy next year.
Meanwhile he drew wise morals from his play,
And in these solemn periods stalked away:—
"Blessed were the fair like you; her faults who stopped
And closed her follies when the curtain dropped!
No more in vice or error to engage,
Or play the fool at large on life's great stage."

## FRANCE

During the eighteenth century in France the tradition of classicism in tragedy was carried on through the prestige of **Voltaire** (François Marie Arouet de Voltaire, 1694–1778), who throughout his long life exerted a remarkable influence on all European literature. His own tragedies were written in imitation of Racine, but became more declamatory and formal. In comedy there were numerous imitators of Molière until these were gradually replaced by the genteel *comedy of tears* (*comédie larmoyante*), the appeal of which was frankly sentimental. Even Voltaire succumbed to the prevailing taste, and introduced the pathetic into his comedies.

Under the influence of **Denis Diderot** (1713–1784) the *comédie larmoyante* merged into the drama of ordinary life (*tragédie bourgeoise*). Diderot has been called "the father of the modern domestic drama"; but he himself admitted that he owed his new type to Lillo's *The London Merchant.*[7] He opposed the classical rules upheld by Voltaire. He claimed that his plays were examples of neither the traditional tragedy nor comedy, but of a third type partaking of the nature of both, which he called *serious drama* (*genre sérieux*). The subject matter was drawn from real life of everyday people (*bourgeoisie*). Diderot's influence, however, made itself felt, principally in Germany, through his critical essays on the drama rather than through his plays.

The best French comedies of the eighteenth century were written by the picturesque **Beaumarchais** (Pierre Augustin Caron de Beaumarchais, 1732–1799). He defended the *serious drama* against what he calls "the vast torrent of objections" held against it by "general opinion." In his own great comedies, however, he reverts to the romantic comedy of intrigue. The first of these, *The Barber of Seville* (1775), like *The Rivals* of his English contemporary Sheridan, failed at the first performance, but after a revision by the author became a popular success. The sequel, *The Marriage of Figaro* (1778), won an unprecedented success not only because of the brilliancy of the dialogue, the skill of its construction, and its humor; but also because in its satire on the aristocracy it was acclaimed as a "herald of the Revolution."

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[1] **loo:** a game of cards.

[2] **vole:** winning all the tricks, grand slam.

[3] **main:** a throw of the dice.

[4] **cockles:** a game.

[5] **card drums:** *modern*, bridge parties.

[6] **spadille . . . queen:** terms in the card game of *ombre.*

[7] See page 391.

## GERMANY

In France and in England the history of the drama was centered in Paris and London; but in Germany there was no one great capital city. The Thirty Years' War (1619–1648) and the disintegration it brought with it checked any probable development of a national drama in the seventeenth century. The petty royal courts of the various German kingdoms were patterned after Versailles. Consequently, German playwrights closely imitated French neo-classic drama. The farces of the people had no relation to these literary court plays. There was, therefore, little native growth in drama. At length about the middle of the eighteenth century a company of strolling actors under the direction of Karoline Neuber settled in Leipzig. There, at the suggestion of J. C. Gottsched, a university professor and critic who upheld the French classic tradition, they began to produce the plays of Molière, Corneille, and Racine.

This first earnest literary theatre attracted to it the young **Lessing** (Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, 1729–1781), then a theological student at the University of Leipzig. In spite of the protests of his father, Lessing some years later became the first original dramatist and critic of Germany. His play, *Miss Sarah Sampson* (1755), marks an epoch in German drama; for it is a sentimental tragedy of middle-class life, and breaks away from the French classic restrictions.[1] In his later critical essays, notably the *Hamburg Dramaturgy* (*Hamburgische Dramaturgie*, 1767–1768), which was written originally as commentaries on the plays of the new National Theatre which he had helped to establish at Hamburg, Lessing proved the falsity of the French interpretation of Aristotle's *Poetics*, and in opposition to the powerful influence of Voltaire, restored the simplicity of the Greeks and the freedom of Shakespeare to dramatic theory.

Before the death of Lessing there had begun the period of *Storm and Stress* (*Sturm und Drang*), so called from the title of a play by one of the young dramatists of the movement. This was marked by an enthusiastic admiration for Shakespeare, and by a romantic revival. The quest for "naturalness" led to the rejection of all formal restrictions and the glorification of the spirit of revolt. Drama became subjective and passionate, full of vigorous action and of intense individualism.

The great **Goethe** (Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, 1749–1832) in his first drama *Götz von Berlichingen* (1773) allied himself with the *Sturm und Drang* movement; but later in his long career he returned to a more purely classic form, and influenced **Schiller** (Johann Christoph Friedrich von Schiller, 1759–1805) to do the same. Schiller's first play, *The Robbers*, was begun at eighteen when the young author was stirred to an indignant outburst against all restraint on account of the military restrictions of the ducal school he was compelled to attend, which frowned upon his literary enthusiasms and sternly directed his studies to the more respected profession of medicine. The play caused a sensation when it was privately printed by Schiller, for it expressed perfectly the romantic revolt of the *Sturm und Drang* movement. After having been imprisoned by the governing duke for producing such a radical play, young Schiller ran away from Würtenberg, and took refuge with friends where he could write plays in peace.

In the succeeding years Schiller studied and wrote history, philosophy, ballad and lyric poetry, and in the last seven years of his short life, composed his great historical dramas. In 1799 he settled at Weimar in order to be near Goethe. The friendship of these two great poets and their association in the production of plays at the theatre established by the Duke of Weimar, brought about a revival of drama in Germany. Since Goethe was greater as a philosopher and poet than as a practical dramatist, (for his greatest work *Faust* is a philosophical poem rather than a play), it is to Schiller that Germany owes her greatest dramas. Under Goethe's direction these were produced at Weimar; and thus, it may be said, was established the first national theatre of Germany.

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[1] *See* Lillo and Diderot *supra.*

Schiller's greatest plays are: *Don Carlos* (1786); the trilogy on Wallenstein:—*Wallenstein's Camp (Wallensteins Lager); The Piccolomini (Die Piccolomini); Wallenstein's Death (Wallensteins Tod)* (1798–99); *Mary Stuart (Maria Stuart)* (1800); *The Maid of Orleans (Die Jungfrau von Orleans)* (1801); *The Bride of Messina (Die Braut von Messina)* (1803); *William Tell (Wilhelm Tell)* (1804).

Beginning with Goethe, a number of German critics turned to the annotation and discussion of Shakespeare's plays, and the publication of definite dramatic theories. These men established German romantic influence throughout Europe, and broke the hold of French formalism that had for so long hindered dramatic originality. The translation of Shakespeare by the brothers Schlegel gave an impetus to romantic drama. Studies in the history and theory of the drama were written by dramatists and critics alike. Some of the most famous critics were: the Brothers **Schlegel** (August Wilhelm and Friedrich von Schlegel, 1767–1845 and 1772–1829); **W. F. Hegel** (1770–1831); and **Gustav Freytag** (1816 1895). Indeed the influence of the latter's *Dramatic Technique (Die Technik des Dramas*, 1863) has lasted into the twentieth century, and has only recently been replaced by the theories of contemporary dramatists.[1]

## WILLIAM TELL[2]

(Wilhelm Tell)

Johann Christoph Friedrich von Schiller

*Produced at Weimar on March 17, 1804*

Translated in the original metre by Sir Theodore Martin, LL.D.

### DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

Hermann Gessler, *governor of Schwyz and Uri*
Werner, *baron of Attinghausen, free noble of Switzerland*
Ulrich von Rudenz, *his nephew*

Werner Stauffacher,
Konrad Hunn,
Hans auf der Mauer,
Jörg im Hofe,
Ulrich der Schmidt,
Jost von Weiler,
Itel Reding,
} *People of Schwyz*

Walter Fürst,
Wilhelm Tell,
Rösselmann, *the priest,*
Petermann, *sacristan,*
Kuoni, *herdsman,*
Werni, *huntsman,*
Ruodi, *fisherman,*
} *of Uri*

Arnold of Melchthal,
Konrad Baumgarten,
Meyer von Sarnen,
Struth von Winkelried,
Klaus von der Flüe,
Burkhart am Bühel,
Arnold von Sewa,
} *of Unterwald*

Pfeiffer of Lucerne
Kunz of Gersau
Jenni, *fisherman's son*
Seppi, *herdsman's son*

Gertrude, *Stauffacher's wife*
Hedwig, *wife of Tell, daughter of Fürst*
Bertha of Bruneck, *a rich heiress*

Armgart,
Mechthild,
Elsbeth,
Hildegard,
} *peasant women*

---

[1] *See The Introduction*, page 3.

[2] Copyright, 1898, by David McKay, Philadelphia.

WALTER, } *Tell's sons*
WILHELM,
FRIESSHARDT, } *soldiers*
LEUTHOLD,
RUDOLPH DER HARRAS, *Gessler's master of the horse*
JOHANNES PARRICIDA, *Duke of Suabia*
STÜSSI, *overseer, ranger*
THE MAYOR OF URI
A COURIER
MASTER STONEMASON, COMPANIONS AND WORKMEN
TASKMASTER
A CRIER, *the Stier of Uri (the horn-blower of Uri)*
MONKS OF THE ORDER OF CHARITY
HORSEMEN OF GESSLER AND LANDENBERG
MANY PEASANTS; MEN AND WOMEN FROM THE WALDSTETTEN

## ACT I

### SCENE I

*A high rocky shore of the lake of Lucerne opposite Schwyz.*[1] *The lake makes a bend into the land; a hut stands at a short distance from the shore; the fisher boy is rowing about in his boat. Beyond the lake are seen the green meadows, the hamlets and farms of Schwyz, lying in the clear sunshine. On the left are observed the peaks of the Hacken*[2]*, surrounded with clouds; to the right, and in the remote distance, appear the Glaciers. The Ranz des Vaches*[3]*, and the tinkling of cattle bells, continue for some time after the rising of the curtain.*

FISHER BOY [*sings in his boat*]

*Melody of the Ranz des Vaches*

The clear smiling lake woo'd to bathe in its deep,
A boy on its green shore had laid him to sleep;
Then heard he a melody
Flowing and soft,
And sweet, as when angels
Are singing aloft.
And as thrilling with pleasure he wakes from his rest,
The waters are murmuring over his breast;
And a voice from the deep cries,
"With me thou must go,
I charm the young shepherd,
I lure him below."

HERDSMAN [*on the mountains*]

*Air.—Variation of the Ranz des Vaches*

Farewell, ye green meadows,
Farewell, sunny shore,
The herdsman must leave you,
The summer is o'er.
We go to the hills, but you'll see us again,
When the cuckoo is calling, and wood-notes are gay,
When flow'rets are blooming in dingle and plain,
And the brooks sparkle up in the sunshine of May.
Farewell, ye green meadows,
Farewell, sunny shore,
The herdsman must leave you,
The summer is o'er.

CHAMOIS HUNTER [*appearing on the top of a cliff*]

*Second Variation of the Ranz des Vaches*

On the heights peals the thunder, and trembles the bridge.
The huntsman bounds on by the dizzying ridge.
Undaunted he hies him
O'er ice-covered wild,
Where leaf never budded,
Nor Spring ever smiled;
And beneath him an ocean of mist, where his eye
No longer the dwellings of man can espy;
Through the parting clouds only
The earth can be seen,
Far down 'neath the vapor
The meadows of green.

*A change comes over the landscape. A rumbling, cracking noise is heard among the mountains. Shadows of clouds sweep across the scene.*

---

[1] **Schwyz:** town in the canton Schwyz. Uri, Schwyz and Unterwalden are the three Forest Cantons in the play.

[2] **Hacken:** high Alps.

[3] **Ranz des Vaches:** A melody played by Swiss herdsmen on the alpenhorn (the three-foot long, curved wooden horn), to call in the cows. It is sometimes sung as a kind of yodel.

RUODI, *the fisherman, comes out of his cottage.* WERNI, *the huntsman, descends from the rocks.* KUONI, *the shepherd, enters, with a milkpail on his shoulders, followed by* SEPPI, *his assistant*

*Ruodi.* Bestir thee, Jenni, haul the boat on shore.
The grizzly Vale-King[1] comes, the Glaciers moan,
The lofty Mytenstein[2] draws on his hood,
And from the Stormcleft chilly blows the wind;
The storm will burst before we are prepared.
*Kuoni.* 'Twill rain ere long; my sheep browse eagerly,
And Watcher there is scraping up the earth.
*Werni.* The fish are leaping, and the water-hen
Dives up and down. A storm is coming on.
*Kuoni* [*to his boy*]. Look, Seppi, if the cattle are not straying.
*Seppi.* There goes brown Liesel, I can hear her bells.
*Kuoni.* Then all are safe; she ever ranges farthest.
*Ruodi.* You've a fine yoke of bells there, master herdsman.
*Werni.* And likely cattle, too. Are they your own?
*Kuoni.* I'm not so rich. They are the noble lord's
Of Attinghaus, and trusted to my care.
*Ruodi.* How gracefully yon heifer bears her ribbon!
*Kuoni.* Ay, well she knows she's leader of the herd,
And, take it from her, she'd refuse to feed.
*Ruodi.* You're joking now. A beast devoid of reason—
*Werni.* That's easy said. But beasts have reason, too,—
And that we know, we men that hunt the chamois:
They never turn to feed—sagacious creatures!—
Till they have placed a sentinel ahead,
Who pricks his ears whenever we approach,
And gives alarm with clear and piercing pipe.
*Ruodi* [*to the shepherd*]. Are you for home?
*Kuoni.* The Alp[3] is grazed quite bare.
*Werni.* A safe return, my friend!
*Kuoni.* The same to you!
Men come not always back from tracks like yours.
*Ruodi.* But who comes here, running at topmost speed?
*Werni.* I know the man; 'tis Baumgart of Alzellen.
*Konrad Baumgarten* [*rushing in breathless*]. For God's sake, ferryman, your boat!
*Ruodi.* How now?
Why all this haste?
*Baum.* Cast off! My life's at stake!
Set me across!
*Kuoni.* Why, what's the matter, friend?
*Werni.* Who are pursuing you? First tell us that.
*Baum.* [*to the fisherman*]. Quick, quick, e'en now they're close upon my heels!
The Viceroy's horsemen are in hot pursuit!
I'm a lost man, should they lay hands upon me.
*Ruodi.* Why are the troopers in pursuit of you?
*Baum.* First save my life, and then I'll tell you all.
*Werni.* There's blood upon your garments—how is this?
*Baum.* The imperial Seneschal, who dwelt at Rossberg—
*Kuoni.* How! What! The Wolfshot?[4] Is it he pursues you?

---

[1] **Vale-King:** The German is, *Thalvogt*, Ruler of the Valley—the name given figuratively to a dense grey mist which the south wind sweeps into the valleys from the mountain tops. It is well known as the precursor of stormy weather.

[2] **Mytenstein:** here Schiller means the *Mytenstock*, 6460 feet high, mentioned in the stage setting as the *Hacken*. When the peaks are cloud-covered, it is a sign of stormy weather.

[3] **The Alp:** here, high mountain pasture. (So used in Switzerland.)

[4] **Wolfshot:** In German, *Wolfenschiessen*—a young man of noble family, and a native of Unterwalden, who attached himself to the House of Austria, and was appointed *Burgvogt*, or Seneschal, of the Castle of Rossberg. He was killed by Baumgarten in the manner, and for the cause, mentioned in the text.

*Baum.* He'll ne'er hurt man again; I've settled him.
*All* [*starting back*]. Now, God forgive you, what is this you've done?
*Baum.* What every free man in my place had done.
I have but used mine own good household right
'Gainst him that would have wrong'd my wife—my honor.
*Kuoni.* And has he wrong'd you in your honor, then?
*Baum.* That he did not fulfil his foul desire
Is due to God and to my trusty axe.
*Werni.* You've cleft his skull then, have you, with your axe?
*Kuoni.* O, tell us all! You've time enough, before
The boat can be unfastened from its moorings.
*Baum.* When I was in the forest felling timber,
My wife came running out in mortal fear.
"The Seneschal," she said, "was in my house,
Had order'd her to get a bath prepared,
And thereupon had ta'en unseemly freedoms,
From which she rid herself, and flew to me."
Arm'd as I was, I sought him, and my axe
Has given his bath a bloody benediction.
*Werni.* And you did well; no man can blame the deed.
*Kuoni.* The tyrant! Now he has his just reward!
We men of Unterwald[1] have owed it long.
*Baum.* The deed got wind, and now they're in pursuit.
Heavens! whilst we speak, the time is flying fast.
*It begins to thunder.*
*Kuoni.* Quick, ferryman, and set the good man over.
*Ruodi.* Impossible! a storm is close at hand,
Wait till it pass! You must.
*Baum.* Almighty heavens!
I cannot wait; the least delay is death.
*Kuoni* [*to the fisherman*]. Push out—God with you! We should help our neighbors;
The like misfortune may betide us all.
*Thunder and the roaring of the wind.*
*Ruodi.* The South-wind's up![2] See how the lake is rising!
I cannot steer against both storm and wave.
*Baum.* [*clasping him by the knees*]. God so help you, as now you pity me!
*Werni.* His life's at stake. Have pity on him, man!
*Kuoni.* He is a father: has a wife and children.
*Repeated peals of thunder.*
*Ruodi.* What! and have I not, then, a life to lose,
A wife and child at home as well as he?
See, how the breakers foam, and toss, and whirl,
And the lake eddies up from all its depths!
Right gladly would I save the worthy man,
But 'tis impossible, as you must see.
*Baum.* [*still kneeling*]. Then must I fall into the tyrant's hands,
And with the port of safety close in sight!
Yonder it lies! My eyes can measure it,
My very voice can echo to its shores.
There is the boat to carry me across,
Yet must I lie here helpless and forlorn.
*Kuoni.* Look! who comes here?
*Ruodi.* 'Tis Tell, brave Tell, of Bürglen.[3]

*Enter* Tell *with a cross-bow*

*Tell.* Who is the man that here implores for aid?
*Kuoni.* He is from Alzellen, and to guard his honor
From touch of foulest shame, has slain the Wolfshot,

---

[1] **Unterwald:** a canton in central Switzerland, across the lake from Schwyz.

[2] **South . . . up:** Literally, The *Föhn* is loose! "When," says Müller, in his History of Switzerland, "the wind called the Föhn is high, the navigation of the lake becomes extremely dangerous. Such is its vehemence, that the laws of the country require that the fires shall be extinguished in the houses while it lasts, and the night watches are doubled. The inhabitants lay heavy stones upon the roofs of their houses, to prevent their being blown away."

[3] **Bürglen:** Bürglen, in the canton of Uri, the birthplace and residence of Tell. A chapel, erected in 1522, remains on the spot formerly occupied by the house. It is very near Altdorf.

The Imperial Seneschal, who dwelt at Rossberg.
The Viceroy's troopers are upon his heels;
He begs the boatman here to take him over,
But he, in terror of the storm, refuses.
*Ruodi.* Well, there is Tell can steer as well as I,
He'll be my judge, if it be possible.
[*Violent peals of thunder—the lake becomes more tempestuous.*]
Am I to plunge into the jaws of hell?
I should be mad to dare the desperate act.
*Tell.* The brave man thinks upon himself the last.
Put trust in God, and help him in his need!
*Ruodi.* Safe in the port, 'tis easy to advise.
There is the boat, and there the lake! Try you!
*Tell.* The lake may pity, but the Viceroy will not.
Come, venture, man!
*Shepherd* and *Huntsman.* O save him! save him! save him!
*Ruodi.* Though 'twere my brother, or my darling child,
I would not go. It is St. Simon's day,[1]
The lake is up, and calling for its victim.
*Tell.* Nought's to be done with idle talking here.
Time presses on—the man must be assisted.
Say, boatman, will you venture?
*Ruodi.* No; not I.
*Tell.* In God's name, then, give me the boat! I will,
With my poor strength, see what is to be done!
*Kuoni.* Ha, noble Tell!
*Werni.* That's like a gallant huntsman!
*Baum.* You are my angel, my preserver, Tell.
*Tell.* I may preserve you from the Viceroy's power,
But from the tempest's rage another must.
Yet you had better fall into God's hands
Than into those of men. [*To the herdsman.*] Herdsman, do thou
Console my wife, should aught of ill befall me.
I do but what I may not leave undone.
[*He leaps into the boat.*]
*Kuoni* [*to the fisherman*]. A pretty man to be a boatman, truly!
What Tell could risk, you dared not venture on.
*Ruodi.* Far better men than I would not ape Tell.
There does not live his fellow 'mong the mountains.
*Werni* [*who has ascended a rock*]. He pushes off. God help thee now, brave sailor!
Look how his bark is reeling on the waves!
*Kuoni* [*on the shore*]. The surge has swept clean over it. And now
'Tis out of sight. Yet stay, there 'tis again!
Stoutly he stems the breakers, noble fellow!
*Seppi.* Here come the troopers hard as they can ride!
*Kuoni.* Heavens! so they do! Why, that was help, indeed.

*Enter a troop of horsemen*

*1st Horseman.* Give up the murderer! You have him here!
*2nd H.* This way he came! 'Tis useless to conceal him!
*Ruodi* and *Kuoni.* Whom do you mean?
*1st H.* [*discovering the boat*]. The devil! What do I see?
*Werni* [*from above*]. Is't he in yonder boat ye seek? Ride on,
If you lay to, you may o'ertake him yet.
*2nd H.* Curse on you, he's escaped!
*1st H.* [*to the shepherd and fisherman*]. You help'd him off,
And you shall pay for it. Fall on their herds!
Down with the cottage! burn it! beat it down!
*They rush off.*
*Seppi* [*hurrying after them*]. Oh my poor lambs!
*Kuoni* [*following him*]. Unhappy me, my herds!

---

[1] **St. Simon's day:** October 28. In the original *Simon's* and *Jude's*. According to an ancient superstition, rivers and lakes demand human sacrifices once a year.

*Werni.* The tyrants!
*Ruodi* [*wringing his hands*]. Righteous Heaven! Oh, when will come
Deliverance to this devoted land?
[*Exeunt severally*

### Scene II

*A lime tree in front of* Stauffacher's *house at Steinen,*[1] *in Schwyz, upon the public road, near a bridge.*

Werner Stauffacher *and* Pfeiffer, *of Lucerne, enter into conversation.*

*Pfeiffer.* Ay, ay, friend Stauffacher, as I have said,
Swear not to Austria,[2] if you can help it.
Hold by the Empire[3] stoutly as of yore,
And God preserve you in your ancient freedom!
*Presses his hand warmly and is going.*
*Stauffacher.* Wait till my mistress comes. Now do! You are
My guest in Schwyz—I in Lucerne am yours.
*Pfeiff.* Thanks! thanks! But I must reach Gersau[4] to-day.
Whatever grievances your rulers' pride
And grasping avarice may yet inflict,
Bear them in patience—soon a change may come.
Another emperor may mount the throne.
But Austria's once, and you are hers for ever.
[*Exit*

Stauffacher *sits down sorrowfully upon a bench under the lime tree.* Gertrude, *his wife, enters, and finds him in this posture. She places herself near him, and looks at him for some time in silence.*

*Gertrude.* So sad, my love! I scarcely know thee now.
For many a day in silence I have mark'd
A moody sorrow furrowing thy brow.
Some silent grief is weighing on thy heart.
Trust it to me. I am thy faithful wife,
And I demand my half of all thy cares.
[Stauffacher *gives her his hand and is silent.*]
Tell me what can oppress thy spirits thus?
Thy toil is blest—the world goes well with thee—
Our barns are full—our cattle, many a score;
Our handsome team of sleek and well-fed steeds
Brought from the mountain pastures safely home,
To winter in their comfortable stalls.
There stands thy house—no nobleman's more fair!
'Tis newly built with timber of the best,
All grooved and fitted with the nicest skill;
Its many glistening windows tell of comfort!
'Tis quarter'd o'er with scutcheons of all hues,
And proverbs sage, which passing travellers
Linger to read, and ponder o'er their meaning.[5]
*Stauff.* The house is strongly built, and handsomely,
But, ah! the ground on which we built it totters.
*Gert.* Tell me, dear Werner, what you mean by that?
*Stauff.* No later since than yesterday I sat
Beneath this linden, thinking with delight
How fairly all was finished, when from Küssnacht[6]
The Viceroy and his men came riding by.
Before this house he halted in surprise:
At once I rose, and, as beseemed his rank,
Advanced respectfully to greet the lord,
To whom the Emperor delegates his power,

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[1] **Stauffacher's house at Steinen:** A chapel built about 1400 marks the spot where Stauffacher's house stood. He is an historical character; but Tell is probably legendary.

[2] **Austria:** He means here Albrecht as Duke of Austria.

[3] **Empire:** the Holy Roman Empire of the Middle Ages; the Emperor, being elected, was at this time (1307) Albrecht, an Austrian Duke of the House of Habsburg. The Forest Cantons of Switzerland were independent of Austria though part of the Empire. The difficulty of the Swiss lay in keeping their allegiance to the Emperor, while not submitting to him as Duke of Austria. At the same time they were entirely willing to pay their feudal duties to their respective overlords in the cantons, as long as these lords were not vassals of Austria.

[4] **Gersau:** on the Lake of Lucerne.

[5] **'Tis . . . meaning:** Old houses so decorated are still to be seen in Germany, Austria, and Switzerland.

[6] **Küssnacht:** a village in Schwyz where the ruins of the castle of Gessler (*the Viceroy*) are still to be seen.

As judge supreme within our Canton here.
"Who is the owner of this house?" he asked,
With mischief in his thoughts, for well he knew.
With prompt decision, thus I answered him:
"The Emperor, your grace—my lord and yours,
And held by me in fief." On this he answered,
"I am the Emperor's viceregent here,
And will not that each peasant churl should build
At his own pleasure, bearing him as freely
As though he were the master in the land.
I shall make bold to put a stop to this!"
So saying, he, with menaces, rode off,
And left me musing with a heavy heart
On the fell purpose that his words betray'd.
*Gert.* Mine own dear lord and husband! Wilt thou take
A word of honest council from thy wife?
I boast to be the noble Iberg's child,
A man of wide experience. Many a time,
As we sat spinning in the winter nights,
My sisters and myself, the people's chiefs
Were wont to gather round our father's hearth,
To read the old imperial charters, and
To hold sage converse on the country's weal.
Then heedfully I listened, marking well
What now the wise man thought, or good man wished;
And garner'd up their wisdom in my heart.
Hear then, and mark me well; for thou wilt see,
I long have known the grief that weighs thee down.
The Viceroy hates thee, fain would injure thee,
For thou hast cross'd his wish to bend the Swiss
In homage to this upstart house of princes,[1]
And kept them staunch, like their good sires of old,
In true allegiance to the Empire. Say,
Is't not so, Werner? Tell me, am I wrong?
*Stauff.* 'Tis even so. For this doth Gessler hate me.
~~*Gert.*~~ He burns with envy, too, to see thee living
Happy and free on thine inheritance,
For he has none. From the Emperor himself
Thou hold'st in fief the lands thy fathers left thee.[2]
There's not a prince i' the Empire that can show
A better title to his heritage;
For thou hast over thee no lord but one,
And he the mightiest of all Christian kings.
Gessler we know, is but a younger son,
His only wealth the knightly cloak he wears;
He therefore views an honest man's good fortune
With a malignant and a jealous eye.
Long has he sworn to compass thy destruction.
As yet thou art uninjured. Wilt thou wait
Till he may safely give his malice scope?
A wise man would anticipate the blow.
*Stauff.* What's to be done?
*Gert.* Now hear what I advise.
Thou knowest well, how here with us in Schwyz
All worthy men are groaning underneath
This Gessler's grasping, grinding tyranny.
Doubt not the men of Unterwald as well,
And Uri, too, are chafing like ourselves
At this oppressive and heart-wearying yoke.
For there, across the lake, the Landenberg[3]
Wields the same iron rule as Gessler here—
No fishing-boat comes over to our side

---

[1] upstart house of princes: the Habsburgs had become Dukes of Austria only twenty-nine years before the action of the play.

[2] From the Emperor . . . . thee: Gessler, being a younger son, had inherited no castles and lands. On the other hand, Stauffacher, like the princes of Europe, held a fief from the Emperor himself, to whom alone he owed a feudal vassal's allegiance.

[3] See note, Act I, Scene IV, line 39, (page 489).

But brings the tidings of some new encroachment,
Some outrage fresh, more grievous than the last.
Then it were well that some of you—true men—
Men sound at heart, should secretly devise
How best to shake this hateful thraldom off.
Well do I know that God would not desert you,
But lend his favor to the righteous cause.
Hast thou no friend in Uri, say, to whom
Thou frankly may'st unbosom all thy thoughts?
*Stauff.* I know full many a gallant fellow there,
And nobles, too,—great men, of high repute,
In whom I can repose unbounded trust.
[*Rising.*]
Wife! What a storm of wild and perilous thoughts
Hast thou stirr'd up within my tranquil breast?
The darkest musings of my bosom thou
Hast dragg'd to light, and placed them full before me;
And what I scarce dared harbor e'en in thought
Thou speakest plainly out, with fearless tongue.
But hast thou weigh'd well what thou urgest thus?
Discord will come, and the fierce clang of arms,
To scare this valley's long unbroken peace,
If we, a feeble shepherd race, shall dare
Him to the fight, that lords it o'er the world.
Ev'n now they only wait some fair pretext
For setting loose their savage warrior hordes,[1]
To scourge and ravage this devoted land,
To lord it o'er us with the victor's rights,
And, 'neath the show of lawful chastisement,
Despoil us of our chartered liberties.
*Gert.* You, too, are men; can wield a battle-axe
As well as they. God ne'er deserts the brave.
*Stauff.* Oh wife! a horrid, ruthless fiend is war,
That strikes at once the shepherd and his flock.
*Gert.* Whate'er great Heaven inflicts, we must endure;
No heart of noble temper brooks injustice.
*Stauff.* This house—thy pride—war, unrelenting war,
Will burn it down.
*Gert.* And did I think this heart
Enslaved and fettered to the things of earth,
With *my* own hand I'd hurl the kindling torch.
*Stauff.* Thou hast faith in human kindness, wife; but war
Spares not the tender infant in its cradle.
*Gert.* There is a friend to innocence in heaven!
Look forward, Werner—not behind you, now!
*Stauff.* We men may perish bravely, sword in hand;
But oh, what fate, my Gertrude, may be thine?
*Gert.* None are so weak but one last choice is left.
A spring from yonder bridge, and I am free!
*Stauff.* [*embracing her*]. Well may he fight for hearth and home, that clasps
A heart so rare as thine against his own!
What are the hosts of Emperors to him?
Gertrude, farewell! I will to Uri straight.
There lives my worthy comrade, Walter Fürst;
His thoughts and mine upon these times are one.
There, too, resides the noble Banneret[2]
Of Attinghaus. High though of blood he be,

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[1] **Ev'n now . . . . hordes:** The Austrians do not dare to annex Switzerland openly; but may be fostering rebellion simply to give a pretext for war in order to conquer it.

[2] **Banneret:** See note, Act II, Scene I, line 66, (page 495).

He loves the people, honors their old customs.
With both of these I will take counsel how
To rid us bravely of our country's foe.
Farewell! and while I am away, bear thou
A watchful eye in management at home
The pilgrim, journeying to the house of God,
And pious monk, collecting for his cloister,
To these give liberally from purse and garner.
Stauffacher's house would not be hid. Right out
Upon the public way it stands, and offers
To all that pass an hospitable roof.

*While they are retiring,* Tell *enters with* Baumgarten

*Tell.* Now, then, you have no further need of me.
Enter yon house. 'Tis Werner Stauffacher's,
A man that is a father to distress.
See, there he is, himself! Come, follow me.
[*They retire. Scene changes*

## Scene III

*A common near Altdorf.*[1] *On an eminence in the background a Castle in progress of erection, and so far advanced that the outline of the whole may be distinguished. The back part is finished; men are working at the front. Scaffolding, on which the workmen are going up and down. A slater is seen upon the highest part of the roof. All is bustle and activity.*

Taskmaster, Mason, Workmen *and* Laborers

*Taskmaster* [*with a stick, urging on the workmen*]. Up, up! You've rested long enough. To work!
The stones here! Now the mortar, and the lime!
And let his lordship see the work advanced,
When next he comes. These fellows crawl like snails!
[*To two laborers, with loads.*] What! call ye that a load? Go, double it.
Is this the way ye earn your wages, laggards?
*1st Workman.* 'Tis very hard that we must bear the stones
To make a keep and dungeon for ourselves!
*Task.* What's that you mutter? 'Tis a worthless race,
And fit for nothing but to milk their cows,
And saunter idly up and down the mountains.
*Old Man* [*sinks down exhausted*]. I can no more.
*Task.* [*shaking him*]. Up, up, old man, to work!
*1st W.* Have you no bowels of compassion, thus
To press so hard upon a poor old man
That scarce can drag his feeble limbs along?
*Master Mason* and *Workmen.* Shame, shame upon you—shame! It cries to heaven!
*Task.* Mind your own business. I but do my duty.
*1st W.* Pray, master, what's to be the name of this
Same castle, when 'tis built?
*Task.* The Keep of Uri;
For by it we shall keep you in subjection.
*Work.* The Keep of Uri?
*Task.* Well, why laugh at that?
*2nd W.* So you'll keep Uri with this paltry place!
*1st W.* How many mole-hills such as that must first
Be piled above each other, ere you make
A mountain equal to the least in Uri?
[Taskmaster *retires*
*Mas. M.* I'll drown the mallet in the deepest lake,
That served my hand on this accursed pile.

*Enter* Tell *and* Stauffacher

*Stauff.* O, that I had not lived to see this sight!
*Tell.* Here 'tis not good to be. Let us proceed.

---

[1] Altdorf: town in Uri.

*Stauff.* Am I in Uri, in the land of freedom?
*Mas. M.* O, sir, if you could only see the vaults
Beneath these towers. The man that tenants them
Will never hear the cock crow more.
*Stauff.* O God!
*Mason.* Look at these ramparts and these buttresses,
That seem as they were built to last for ever.
*Tell.* Hands can destroy whatever hands have rear'd.
[*Pointing to the mountains.*]
*That* house of freedom God hath built for us.

*A drum is heard. People enter bearing a cap upon a pole, followed by a crier. Women and children thronging tumultuously after them*

*1st W.* What means the drum? Give heed!
*Mason.* Why, here's a mumming!
And look, the cap—what can they mean by that?
*Crier.* In the Emperor's name, give ear!
*Work.* Hush! silence! hush!
*Crier.* Ye men of Uri, ye do see this cap!
It will be set upon a lofty pole
In Altdorf, in the market-place: and this
Is the Lord Governor's good-will and pleasure,
The cap shall have like honor as himself,
And all shall reverence it with bended knee,
And head uncovered; thus the king will know
Who are his true and loyal subjects here;
His life and goods are forfeit to the crown
That shall refuse obedience to the order.
[*The people burst out into laughter. The drum beats, and the procession passes on*
*1st W.* A strange device to fall upon, indeed!
Do reverence to a cap! A pretty farce!
Heard ever mortal anything like this?
*Mas. M.* Down to a cap on bended knee, forsooth!
Rare jesting this with men of sober sense!
*1st W.* Nay, were it but the imperial crown, indeed!
But 'tis the cap of Austria! I've seen it
Hanging above the throne in Gessler's hall.
*Mason.* The cap of Austria? Mark that! A snare
To get us into Austria's power, by Heaven!
*Work.* No freeborn man will stoop to such disgrace.
*Mas. M.* Come—to our comrades, and advise with them!
[*They retire*

---

*Tell* [*to* STAUFFACHER]. You see how matters stand. Farewell, my friend!
*Stauff.* Whither away? Oh, leave us not so soon.
*Tell.* They look for me at home. So fare ye well.
*Stauff.* My heart's so full, and has so much to tell you.
*Tell.* Words will not make a heart that's heavy light.
*Stauff.* Yet words may possibly conduct to deeds.
*Tell.* All we can do is to endure in silence.
*Stauff.* But shall we bear what is not to be borne?
*Tell.* Impetuous rulers have the shortest reigns.
When the fierce Southwind rises from his chasms,
Men cover up their fires, the ships in haste
Make for the harbor, and the mighty spirit
Sweeps o'er the earth, and leaves no trace behind.
Let every man live quietly at home;
Peace to the peaceful rarely is denied.
*Stauff.* And is it thus you view our grievances?
*Tell.* The serpent stings not till it is provoked.
Let them alone; they'll weary of themselves
Whene'er they see we are not to be roused.

*Stauff.* Much might be done—did we stand fast together.
*Tell.* When the ship founders, he will best escape
Who seeks no other's safety but his own.
*Stauff.* And you desert the common cause so coldly?
*Tell.* A man can safely count but on himself!
*Stauff.* Nay, even the weak grow strong by union.
*Tell.* But the strong man is strongest when alone.
*Stauff.* Your country, then, cannot rely on you,
If in despair she rise against her foes.
*Tell.* Tell rescues the lost sheep from yawning gulfs:
Is he a man, then, to desert his friends?
Yet, whatsoe'er you do, spare me from council!
I was not born to ponder and select;
But when your course of action is resolved,
Then call on Tell: you shall not find him fail.
[*Exeunt severally. A sudden tumult is heard around the scaffolding*

*Mason* [*running in*]. What's wrong?
*1st W.* [*running forward*]. The slater's fallen from the roof.
*Bertha* [*rushing in*]. Is he dashed to pieces? Run—save him, help!
If help be possible, save him! Here is gold. [*Throws her trinkets among the people.*]

*Mason.* Hence with your gold,—your universal charm,
And remedy for ill! When you have torn
Fathers from children, husbands from their wives,
And scattered woe and wail throughout the land,
You think with gold to compensate for all.
Hence! Till we saw you, we were happy men;
With you came misery and dark despair.
*Berth.* [*to the* TASKMASTER, *who has returned*]. Lives he?
[TASKMASTER *shakes his head.*] Ill-fated towers, with curses built,
And doomed with curses to be tenanted!
[*Exit*

### Scene IV

*The House of* WALTER FÜRST. WALTER FÜRST *and* ARNOLD VON MELCHTHAL *enter simultaneously at different sides*

*Melchthal.* Good Walter Fürst.
*Fürst.* If we should be surprised!
Stay where you are. We are beset with spies.
*Melch.* Have you no news for me from Unterwald?
What of my father? 'Tis not to be borne,
Thus to be pent up like a felon here!
What have I done of such a heinous stamp,
To skulk and hide me like a murderer?
I only laid my staff across the fingers
Of the pert varlet, when before my eyes,
By order of the governor, he tried
To drive away my handsome team of oxen.
*Fürst.* You are too rash by far. He did no more
Than what the governor had ordered him.
You had transgress'd, and therefore should have paid
The penalty, however hard, in silence.
*Melch.* Was I to brook the fellow's saucy words?
"That if the peasant must have bread to eat,
Why, let him go and draw the plough himself!"
It cut me to the very soul to see
My oxen, noble creatures, when the knave
Unyoked them from the plough. As though they felt
The wrong, they lowed and butted with their horns.
On this I could contain myself no longer,
And, overcome by passion, struck him down.
*Fürst.* O, we old men can scarce command ourselves!
And can we wonder youth should break its bounds?
*Melch.* I'm only sorry for my father's sake!
To be away from him, that needs so much

My fostering care! The governor detests him,
Because he hath, whene'er occasion served,
Stood stoutly up for right and liberty.
Therefore they'll bear him hard—the poor old man!
And there is none to shield him from their gripe.
Come what come may, I must go home again.
*Fürst.* Compose yourself, and wait in patience till
We get some tidings o'er from Unterwald.
Away! away! I hear a knock! Perhaps
A message from the Viceroy! Get thee in.
You are not safe from Landenberger's[1] arm
In Uri, for these tyrants pull together.
*Melch.* They teach us Switzers what *we* ought to do.
*Fürst.* Away! I'll call you when the coast is clear. [MELCHTHAL *retires*
Unhappy youth! I dare not tell him all
The evil that my boding heart predicts!
Who's there? The door ne'er opens, but I look
For tidings of mishap. Suspicion lurks
With darkling treachery in every nook.
Even to our inmost rooms they force their way,
These myrmidons of power; and soon we'll need
To fasten bolts and bars upon our doors.

*He opens the door, and steps back in surprise as* WERNER STAUFFACHER *enters.*

What do I see? You, Werner? Now, by Heaven!
A valued guest, indeed. No man e'er set
His foot across this threshold, more esteem'd.
Welcome! thrice welcome, Werner, to my roof!
What brings you here? What seek you here in Uri?
*Stauff.* [*shakes* FÜRST *by the hand*].
The olden times and olden Switzerland.
*Fürst.* You bring them with you. See how I'm rejoiced.
My heart leaps at the very sight of you.
Sit down—sit down, and tell me how you left
Your charming wife, fair Gertrude? Iberg's child.
And clever as her father. Not a man
That wends from Germany, by Meinrad's Cell,[2]
To Italy, but praises far and wide
Your house's hospitality. But say,
Have you come here direct from Flüelen,
And have you noticed nothing on your way,
Before you halted at my door?
*Stauff.* [*sits down*]. I saw
A work in progress, as I came along,
I little thought to see—that likes me ill.
*Fürst.* O friend! you've lighted on my thought at once.
*Stauff.* Such things in Uri ne'er were known before.
Never was prison here in man's remembrance,
Nor ever any stronghold but the grave.
*Fürst.* You name it well. It is the grave of freedom.
*Stauff.* Friend, Walter Fürst, I will be plain with you.
No idle curiosity it is
That brings me here, but heavy cares. I left
Thraldom at home, and thraldom meets me here.
Our wrongs, e'en now, are more than we can bear,
And who shall tell us where they are to end?
From eldest time the Switzer has been free,
Accustom'd only to the mildest rule.
Such things as now we suffer ne'er were known
Since herdsmen first drove cattle to the hills.
*Fürst.* Yes, our oppressions are unparallel'd!

---

[1] **Landenberger:** Berenger von Landenberg, a man of noble family in Thurgau, and Governor of Unterwald, infamous for his cruelties to the Swiss, and particularly to the venerable Henry of the Halden. He was slain at the battle of Morgarten, in 1315.

[2] **Meinrad's Cell:** A cell built in the 9th century, by Meinrad, Count of Hohenzollern, the founder of the Convent of Einsiedeln, subsequently alluded to in the text.

Why even our own good lord of Attinghaus,
Who lived in olden times, himself declares
They are no longer to be tamely borne.
*Stauff.* In Unterwalden yonder, 'tis the same;
And bloody has the retribution been.
The imperial Seneschal, the Wolfshot, who
At Rossberg dwelt, long'd for forbidden fruit—
Baumgarten's wife, that lives at Alzellen,
He wished to overcome in shameful sort,
On which the husband slew him with his axe.
*Fürst.* O, Heaven is just in all its judgments still!
Baumgarten, say you? A most worthy man.
Has he escaped, and is he safely hid?
*Stauff.* Your son-in-law conveyed him o'er the lake,
And he lies hidden in my house at Steinen.
He brought the tidings with him of a thing
That has been done at Sarnen, worse than all,
A thing to make the very heart run blood!
*Fürst* [*attentively*]. Say on. What is it?
*Stauff.* There dwells in Melchthal, then,
Just as you enter by the road from Kerns,
An upright man, named Henry of the Halden,
A man of weight and influence in the Diet.[1]
*Fürst.* Who knows him not? But what of him? Proceed.
*Stauff.* The Landenberg, to punish some offence,
Committed by the old man's son, it seems,
Had given command to take the youth's best pair
Of oxen from his plough; on which the lad
Struck down the messenger and took to flight.
*Fürst.* But the old father—tell me, what of him?
*Stauff.* The Landenberg sent for him, and required
He should produce his son upon the spot;
And when th' old man protested, and with truth,
That he knew nothing of the fugitive,
The tyrant call'd his torturers.
*Fürst* [*springs up and tries to lead him to the other side*]. Hush, no more!
*Stauff.* [*with increasing warmth*]. "And though thy son," he cried, "has 'scaped me now,
I have thee fast, and thou shalt feel my vengeance."
With that they flung the old man to the earth,
And plunged the pointed steel into his eyes.
*Fürst.* Merciful Heaven!
*Melch.* [*rushing out*]. Into his eyes, his eyes?
*Stauff.* [*addresses himself in astonishment to* WALTER FÜRST]. Who is this youth?
*Melch.* [*grasping him convulsively*]. Into his eyes? Speak, speak!
*Fürst.* Oh, miserable hour!
*Stauff.* Who is it, tell me?
[FÜRST *makes a sign to him.*] It is his son! All righteous heaven!
*Melch.* And I
Must be from thence! What! into both his eyes?
*Fürst.* Be calm, be calm; and bear it like a man!
*Melch.* And all for me—for my mad, wilful folly!
Blind, did you say? Quite blind—and both his eyes?
*Stauff.* Ev'n so. The fountain of his sight's dried up.
He ne'er will see the blessed sunshine more.
*Fürst.* Oh, spare his anguish!
*Melch.* Never, never more!
[*Presses his hands upon his eyes and is silent for some moments; then turning from one to the other, speaks in a subdued tone, broken by sobs.*]
O the eye's light, of all the gifts of Heaven[2]

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[1] Diet: the governing council.

[2] O the eye's light . . . . Heaven: compare *Paradise Lost*, Book III, lines 22–24, and 37–50

The dearest, best! From light all beings live—
Each fair created thing—the very plants
Turn with a joyful transport to the light,
And he—he must drag on through all his days
In endless darkness! Never more for him
The sunny meads shall glow, the flow'rets bloom;
Nor shall he more behold the roseate tints
Of the iced mountain top![1] To die is nothing,
But to have life, and not have sight,—oh, that
Is misery indeed! Why do you look
So piteously at me? I have two eyes,
Yet to my poor blind father can give neither!
No, not one gleam of that great sea of light,
That with its dazzling splendor floods my gaze.
*Stauff.* Ah, I must swell the measure of your grief,
Instead of soothing it. The worst, alas!
Remains to tell. They've stripp'd him of his all;
Nought have they left him, save his staff, on which,
Blind, and in rags, he moves from door to door.
*Melch.* Nought but his staff to the old eyeless man!
Stripp'd of his all—even of the light of day,
The common blessing of the meanest wretch.
Tell me no more of patience, of concealment!
Oh, what a base and coward thing am I,
That on mine own security I thought,
And took no care of thine! Thy precious head
Left as a pledge within the tyrant's grasp!
Hence, craven-hearted prudence, hence! And all
My thoughts be vengeance and the despot's blood!
I'll seek him straight—no power shall stay me now—
And at his hands demand my father's eyes.
I'll beard him 'mid a thousand myrmidons!
What's life to me, if in his heart's best blood
I cool the fever of this mighty anguish.
[*He is going*
*Fürst.* Stay, this is madness, Melchthal! What avails
Your single arm against his power? He sits
At Sarnen high within his lordly keep,
And, safe within its battlemented walls,
May laugh to scorn your unavailing rage.
*Melch.* And though he sat within the icy domes
Of yon far Schrechkorn[2]—ay, or higher, where,
Veil'd since eternity, the Jungfrau[2] soars,
Still to the tyrant would I make my way;
With twenty comrades minded like myself
I'd lay his fastness level with the earth!
And if none follow me, and if you all,
In terror for your homesteads and your herds,
Bow in submission to the tyrant's yoke,
I'll call the herdsmen on the hills around me,
And there beneath heaven's free and boundless roof,
Where men still feel as men, and hearts are true,
Proclaim aloud this foul enormity!
*Stauff.* [*to* FÜRST]. 'Tis at its height—and are we then to wait
Till some extremity——
*Melch.* What extremity
Remains for apprehension, when men's eyes
Have ceased to be secure within their sockets?
Are we defenceless? Wherefore did we learn
To bend the cross-bow,—wield the battle-axe?

---

[1] **roseate tints . . . top:** the *Alpenglow*,—the rosy glow on the snow-capped peaks of the Alps after sunset and at dawn. It is one of the most beautiful sights in the world.

[2] **Schreckhorn, Jungfrau:** Great mountains in the Swiss Alps.

What living creature but, in its despair,
Finds for itself a weapon of defence?
The baited stag will turn, and with the show
Of his dread antlers hold the hounds at bay;
The chamois drags the huntsman down th' abyss
The very ox, the partner of man's toil,
The sharer of his roof, that meekly bends
The strength of his huge neck beneath the yoke,
Springs up, if he's provoked, whets his strong horn,
And tosses his tormentor to the clouds.

*Fürst.* If the three Cantons thought as we three do,[1]
Something might, then, be done, with good effect.

*Stauff.* When Uri calls, when Unterwald replies,
Schwyz will be mindful of her ancient league.[2]

*Melch.* I've many friends in Unterwald, and none
That would not gladly venture life and limb,
If fairly backed and aided by the rest.
Oh, sage and reverend fathers of this land,
Here do I stand before your riper years,
An unskill'd youth, whose voice must in the Diet
Still be subdued into respectful silence.
Do not, because that I am young, and want
Experience, slight my counsel and my words.
'Tis not the wantonness of youthful blood
That fires my spirit, but a pang so deep
That e'en the flinty rocks must pity me.
You, too, are fathers, heads of families,
And you must wish to have a virtuous son,
To reverence your grey hairs, and shield your eyes
With pious and affectionate regard.
Do not, I pray, because in limb and fortune
You still are unassail'd, and still your eyes
Revolve undimm'd and sparkling in their spheres,
Oh, do not, therefore, disregard our wrongs!
Above you, too, doth hang the tyrant's sword.
You, too, have striven to alienate the land
From Austria. This was all my father's crime:
You share his guilt, and may his punishment.

*Stauff.* [*to* Fürst]. Do thou resolve! I am prepared to follow.

*Fürst.* First let us learn what steps the noble lords
Von Sillinen and Attinghaus propose.
Their names would rally thousands in the cause.

*Melch.* Is there a name within the Forest Mountains
That carries more respect than thine—and thine?
To names like these the people cling for help

---

[1] **If the three Cantons . . . do:** Fürst is from Uri; Melchthal from Unterwalden; Stauffacher from Schwyz.

[2] **The League:** or Bond, of the Three Cantons was of very ancient origin. They met and renewed it from time to time, especially when their liberties were threatened with danger. A remarkable instance of this occurred in the end of the 13th century, when Albert, of Austria, became Emperor, and when, possibly, for the first time, the Bond was reduced to writing. As it is important to the understanding of many passages of the play, a translation is subjoined of the oldest known document relating to it. The original, which is in Latin and German, is dated in August, 1291, and is under the seals of the whole of the men of Schwyz, the commonalty of the vale of Uri, and the whole of the men of the upper and lower vales of Stanz.

THE BOND

Be it known to every one, that the men of the Dale of Uri, the Community of Schwyz, as also the men of the mountains of Unterwald, in consideration of the evil times, have full confidently bound themselves, and sworn to help each other with all their power and might, property and people, against all who shall do violence to them, or any of them. That is our Ancient Bond.

Whoever hath a Seignior, let him obey according to the conditions of his service.

We are agreed to receive into these dales no Judge who is not a countryman and indweller, or who hath bought his place.

Every controversy amongst the sworn confederates shall be determined by some of the sagest of their number, and if any one shall challenge their judgment, then shall he be constrained to obey it by the rest.

Whoever intentionally or deceitfully kills another shall be executed, and whoever shelters him shall be banished.

Whoever burns the property of another shall no longer be regarded as a countryman, and whoever shelters him shall make good the damage done.

Whoever injures another, or robs him, and hath property in our country, shall make satisfaction out of the same.

No one shall distrain a debtor without a judge, nor any one who is not his debtor, or the surety for such debtor.

Every one in these dales shall submit to the judge, or we, the sworn confederates, all will take satisfaction for all the injury occasioned by his contumacy. And if in any internal division the one party will not accept justice, all the rest shall help the other party. These decrees shall, God willing, endure eternally for our general advantage.

With confidence—such names are household words.
Rich was your heritage of manly virtue,
And richly have you added to its stores.
What need of nobles? Let us do the work
Ourselves. Although we stood alone, methinks,
We should be able to maintain our rights.
*Stauff.* The nobles' wrongs are not so great as ours.
The torrent, that lays waste the lower grounds,
Hath not ascended to the uplands yet.
But let them see the country once in arms,
They'll not refuse to lend a helping hand.
*Fürst.* Were there an umpire 'twixt ourselves and Austria,[1]
Justice and law might then decide our quarrel.
But our oppressor is our emperor too,
And judge supreme. 'Tis God must help us, then.
And our own arm! Be yours the task to rouse
The men of Schwyz; I'll rally friends in Uri.
But whom are we to send to Unterwald?
*Melch.* Thither send me. Whom should it more concern?
*Fürst.* No, Melchthal, no; thou art my guest, and I
Must answer for thy safety.
*Melch.* Let me go.
I know each forest track and mountain pass;
Friends too I'll find, be sure, on every hand,
To give me willing shelter from the foe.
*Stauff.* Nay, let him go; no traitors harbor there:
For tyranny is so abhorred in Unterwald,
No minions can be found to work her will.
In the low valleys, too, the Alzeller[2]
Will gain confederates and rouse the country.
*Melch.* But how shall we communicate, and not
Awaken the suspicion of the tyrants?
*Stauff.* Might we not meet at Brunnen or at Treib,
Hard by the spot where merchant vessels land?
*Fürst.* We must not go so openly to work.
Hear my opinion. On the lake's left bank,
As we sail hence to Brunnen, right against
The Mytenstein,[3] deep-hidden in the wood
A meadow lies, by shepherds called the Rootli,[4]
Because the wood has been uprooted there.
'Tis where our Canton bound'ries verge on yours;—
[*To* MELCHTHAL]. Your boat will carry you across from Schwyz.
[*To* STAUFFACHER]. Thither by lonely bypaths let us wend
At midnight, and deliberate o'er our plans.
Let each bring with him there ten trusty men,
All one at heart with us; and then we may
Consult together for the general weal,
And, with God's guidance, fix our onward course.
*Stauff.* So let it be. And now your true right hand!
Yours, too, young man! and as we now three men
Among ourselves thus knit our hands together
In all sincerity and truth, e'en so
Shall we three Cantons, too, together stand
In victory and defeat, in life and death.
*Fürst* and *Melch.* In life and death.
*They hold their hands clasped together for some moments in silence.*

---

[1] **were there an umpire,** etc: Ordinarily the Emperor would be the umpire in disputes between Switzerland and Austria; but since this Emperor is an Austrian, he is a prejudiced judge.

[2] **the Alzeller:** Baumgarten.

[3] **Mytenstein:** A steep rock, standing on the shore of Lake Lucerne north of Rütli, and nearly opposite to Brunnen. It was made into a monument to Schiller on the one hundredth anniversary of his birth, 1859, and is now called also the *Schillerstein.*

[4] **Rootli:** The Rütli. It was bought by contributions from school children and presented to the Swiss nation on the one hundredth anniversary of Schiller's birth, November 10, 1859.

*Melch.* Alas, my old blind father!
Thou canst no more behold the day of freedom;
But thou shalt hear it. When from Alp to Alp[1]
The beacon fires throw up their flaming signs,
And the proud castles of the tyrants fall,
Into thy cottage shall the Switzer burst,
Bear the glad tidings to thine ear, and o'er
Thy darken'd way shall Freedom's radiance pour.

## ACT II

### SCENE I

*The Mansion of the* BARON OF ATTINGHAUSEN.[2] *A Gothic Hall, decorated with escutcheons and helmets. The* BARON, *a grey-headed man, eighty-five years old, tall and of a commanding mien, clad in a furred pelisse, and leaning on a staff tipped with chamois horn.* KUONI *and six hinds standing round him with rakes and scythes.* ULRICH *of* RUDENZ *enters in the costume of a Knight.*

*Rudenz.* Uncle, I'm here! Your will?
*Attinghausen.* First let me share,
After the ancient custom of our house,
The morning cup with these my faithful servants!
[*He drinks from a cup, which is then passed round.*]
Time was, I stood myself in field and wood,
With mine own eyes directing all their toil,
Even as my banner led them in the fight;
Now I am only fit to play the steward;
And, if the genial sun come not to me,
I can no longer seek it on the mountains.
Thus slowly, in an ever narrowing sphere,
I move on to the narrowest and the last,
Where all life's pulses cease. I now am but
The shadow of my former self, and that
Is fading fast—'twill soon be but a name.
*Kuoni* [*offering* RUDENZ *the cup*]. A pledge, young master!
[RUDENZ *hesitates to take the cup.*]
Nay, Sir, drink it off!
One cup, one heart! You know our proverb, Sir?
*Atting.* Go, children, and at eve, when work is done,
We'll meet and talk the country's business over. [*Exeunt Servants*
Belted and plumed, and all thy bravery on!
Thou art for Altdorf—for the castle,[3] boy?
*Rud.* Yes, uncle. Longer may I not delay—
*Atting.* [*sitting down*]. Why in such haste? Say, are thy youthful hours
Doled in such niggard measure that thou must
Be chary of them to thy aged uncle?
*Rud.* I see my presence is not needed here,
I am but as a stranger in this house.
*Atting.* [*gazes fixedly at him for a considerable time*]. Alas, thou art indeed! Alas, that home
To thee has grown so strange! Oh, Uly! Uly!
I scarce do know thee now, thus deck'd in silks,
The peacock's feather[4] flaunting in thy cap,
And purple mantle round thy shoulders flung;
Thou look'st upon the peasant with disdain,
And takest with a blush his honest greeting.
*Rud.* All honor due to him I gladly pay,
But must deny the right he would usurp.
*Atting.* The sore displeasure of the king is resting
Upon the land, and every true man's heart

---

[1] Alp: here, mountain peak.

[2] Attinghausen: He is a Swiss noble, *Landamman* of Uri. See note on line 66, (page 495).

[3] Altdorf . . . castle: the temporary residence of Gessler. His home was at the castle of Küssnacht.

[4] peacock's feather: The Austrian knights were in the habit of wearing a plume of peacock feathers in their helmets. After the overthrow of the Austrian dominion in Switzerland, it was made highly penal to wear the peacock's feather at any public assembly there.

Is full of sadness for the grievous wrongs
We suffer from our tyrants. Thou alone
Art all unmoved amid the general grief.
Abandoning thy friends, thou tak'st thy stand
Beside thy country's foes, and, as in scorn
Of our distress, pursuest giddy joys,
Courting the smiles of princes, all the while
Thy country bleeds beneath their cruel scourge.
*Rud.* The land is sore oppress'd, I know it, uncle.
But why? Who plunged it into this distress?
A word, one little easy word, might buy
Instant deliverance from such dire oppression,
And win the good-will of the Emperor.
Woe unto those who seal the people's eyes,
And make them adverse to their country's good—
The men who, for their own vile, selfish ends,
Are seeking to prevent the Forest States
From swearing fealty to Austria's House,
As all the countries round about have done.
It fits their humor well to take their seats
Amid the nobles on the Herrenbank;[1]
They'll have the Cæsar for their lord, forsooth,—
That is to say, they'll have no lord at all.
*Atting.* Must I hear this, and from thy lips, rash boy!
*Rud.* You urged me to this answer. Hear me out.
What, uncle, is the character you've stoop'd
To fill contentedly through life? Have you
No higher pride than in these lonely wilds
To be the Landamman or Banneret,[2]
The petty chieftain of a shepherd race?
How! Were it not a far more glorious choice
To bend in homage to our royal lord,
And swell the princely splendors of his court,
Than sit at home, the peer of your own vassals,
And share the judgment-seat with vulgar clowns?
*Atting.* Ah, Uly, Uly; all too well I see,
The tempter's voice has caught thy willing ear,
And pour'd its subtle poison in thy heart.
*Rud.* Yes, I conceal it not. It doth offend
My inmost soul to hear the stranger's gibes,
That taunt us with the name of "Peasant Nobles!"
Think you the heart that's stirring here can brook,
While all the young nobility around
Are reaping honor under Habsburg's banner,
That I should loiter, in inglorious ease,
Here on the heritage my fathers left,
And in the dull routine of vulgar toil
Lose all life's glorious spring? In other lands
Deeds are achieved. A world of fair renown
Beyond these mountains stirs in martial pomp.
My helm and shield are rusting in the hall;
The martial trumpet's spirit-stirring blast,
The herald's call, inviting to the lists,
Rouse not the echoes of these vales, where nought
Save cowherd's horn and cattle bell is heard
In one unvarying dull monotony.
*Atting.* Deluded boy, seduced by empty show!
Despise the land that gave thee birth! Ashamed
Of the good ancient customs of thy sires!
The day will come when thou, with burning tears,
Wilt long for home, and for thy native hills,

---

[1] **Herrenbank:** The bench reserved for the nobility.

[2] **Landamman, Banneret:** The Landamman was an officer chosen by the Swiss Gemeinde, or Diet, to preside over them; Chief magistrate. The Banneret was an officer entrusted with the keeping of the State Banner, and such others as were taken in battle; highest military official.

And that dear melody of tuneful herds
Which now, in proud disgust, thou dost despise!
A day when thou wilt drink its tones in sadness,
Hearing their music in a foreign land.
Oh, potent is the spell that binds to home!
No, no, the cold, false world is not for thee.
At the proud court, with thy true heart, thou wilt
For ever feel a stranger among strangers.
The world asks virtues of far other stamp
Than thou hast learned within these simple vales.
But go—go thither,—barter thy free soul,
Take land in fief, become a prince's vassal,
Where thou might'st be lord paramount, and prince
Of all thine own unburden'd heritage!
O, Uly, Uly, stay among thy people!
Go not to Altdorf. Oh, abandon not
The sacred cause of thy wrong'd native land!
I am the last of all my race. My name
Ends with me. Yonder hang my helm and shield;
They will be buried with me in the grave.[1]
And must I think, when yielding up my breath,
That thou but wait'st the closing of mine eyes
To stoop thy knee to this new feudal court,
And take in vassalage from Austria's hands
The noble lands which I from God received,
Free and unfetter'd as the mountain air!
*Rud.* 'Tis vain for us to strive against the king.[2]
The world pertains to him:—shall we alone,
In mad, presumptuous obstinacy, strive
To break that mighty chain of lands which he
Hath drawn around us with his giant grasp?
His are the markets, his the courts,—his, too,
The highways; nay, the very carrier's horse,
That traffics on the Gotthardt,[3] pays him toll.
By his dominions, as within a net,
We are enclosed, and girded round about.
—And will the Empire shield us? Say, can it
Protect itself 'gainst Austria's growing power?
To God, and not to emperors must we look!
What store can on their promises be placed,
When they, to meet their own necessities,
Can pawn, and even alienate the towns
That flee for shelter 'neath the Eagle's wings?[4]
No, uncle! It is wise and wholesome prudence,
In times like these, when faction's all abroad,
To own attachment to some mighty chief.
The imperial crown's transferred from line to line,[5]
It has no memory for faithful service:
But to secure the favor of these great
Hereditary masters were to sow
Seed for a future harvest.
*Atting.* Art so wise?
Wilt thou see clearer than thy noble sires,
Who battled for fair freedom's costly gem
With life, and fortune, and heroic arm?
Sail down the lake to Lucerne, there inquire
How Austria's rule doth weigh the Cantons down.
Soon she will come to count our sheep, our cattle,

---

[1] **Yonder . . . grave:** According to the custom by which, when the last male descendant of a noble family died, his sword, helmet and shield were buried with him.

[2] **the King:** Albrecht, as Duke of Austria.

[3] **Gotthardt:** The Saint Gothard pass leading into Italy.

[4] **can . . . wings:** This frequently occurred. But in the event of an imperial city being mortgaged for the purpose of raising money, it lost its freedom, and was considered as put out of the realm.

[5] **imperial . . . line:** An allusion to the circumstance of the Imperial Crown not being hereditary, but conferred by election in one of the Counts of the Empire.

To portion out the Alps, e'en to their summits,
And in our own free woods to hinder us
From striking down the eagle or the stag;
To set her tolls on every bridge and gate,
Impoverish us, to swell her lust of sway,
And drain our dearest blood to feed her wars.
No, if our blood must flow, let it be shed
In our own cause! We purchase liberty
More cheaply far than bondage.
*Rud.* What can we,
A shepherd race, against great Albert's hosts?[1]
*Atting.* Learn, foolish boy, to know this shepherd race!
I know them, I have led them on in fight,—
I saw them in the battle at Favenz.[2]
Austria will try, forsooth, to force on us
A yoke we are determined not to bear!
Oh, learn to feel from what a race thou'rt sprung!
Cast not, for tinsel trash and idle show,
The precious jewel of thy worth away.
To be the chieftain of a free born race,
Bound to thee only by their unbought love,
Ready to stand—to fight—to die with thee,
Be that thy pride, be that thy noblest boast!
Knit to thy heart the ties of kindred—home—
Cling to the land, the dear land of thy sires,
Grapple to that with thy whole heart and soul!
Thy power is rooted deep and strongly here,
But in yon stranger world thou'lt stand alone,
A trembling reed beat down by every blast.
Oh come! 'tis long since we have seen thee, Uly!
Tarry but this one day. Only to-day?
Go not to Altdorf. Wilt thou? Not to-day!
For this one day, bestow thee on thy friends.
*Takes his hand.*
*Rud.* I gave my word. Unhand me! I am bound.
*Atting.* [*drops his hand and says, sternly*]. Bound, didst thou say?
Oh yes, unhappy boy,
Thou art indeed. But not by word or oath.
'Tis by the silken mesh of love thou'rt bound.
[RUDENZ *turns away.*]
Ay, hide thee, as thou wilt. 'Tis she, I know,
Bertha of Bruneck, draws thee to the court;
'Tis she that chains thee to the Emperor's service;
Thou think'st to win the noble knightly maid
By thy apostasy. Be not deceived.
She is held out before thee as a lure,
But never meant for innocence like thine.
*Rud.* No more, I've heard enough. So fare you well. [*Exit*

*Atting.* Stay, Uly! Stay! Rash boy, he's gone! I can
Nor hold him back, nor save him from destruction.
And so the Wolfshot has deserted us;—
Others will follow his example soon.
This foreign witchery, sweeping o'er our hills,
Tears with its potent spell our youth away!
O luckless hour, when men and manners strange
Into these calm and happy valleys came,
To warp our primitive and guileless ways.
The new is pressing on with might. The old,
The good, the simple, fleeteth fast away.
New times come on. A race is springing up
That think not as their fathers thought before!
What do I here? All, all are in the grave
With whom erewhile I moved and held converse,

---

[1] **great Albert's hosts:** the Emperor Albrecht's hosts. (This is the first time in the play that the Emperor is named.)

[2] **Favenz:** Faenza in northern Italy. In 1240–1241, Emperor Frederick II besieged the town for eight months. Six hundred Swiss assisted him.

My age has long been laid beneath the sod:
Happy the man who may not live to see
What shall be done by those that follow me!

### SCENE II

*A meadow surrounded by high rocks and wooded ground.*[1] *On the rocks are tracks, with rails and ladders, by which the peasants are afterwards seen descending. In the background the lake is observed, and over it a moon rainbow in the early part of the scene. The prospect is closed by lofty mountains, with glaciers rising behind them. The stage is dark; but the lake and glaciers glisten in the moonlight.*

MELCHTHAL, BAUMGARTEN, WINKELRIED, MEYER VON SARNEN, BURKHART AM BÜHEL, ARNOLD VON SEWA, KLAUS VON DER FLÜE, *and four other peasants, all armed.*

*Melch.* [*behind the scenes*]. The mountain pass is open. Follow me!
I see the rock, and little cross upon it:
This is the spot; here is the Rootli.

*They enter with torches*

*Winkelried.* Hark!
*Sewa.* The coast is clear.
*Meyer.* None of our comrades come?
We are the first, we Unterwaldeners.
*Melch.* How far is't i' the night?
*Baum.* The beacon watch
Upon the Selisberg[2] has just called two.
*A bell is heard at a distance.*
*Meyer.* Hush! Hark!
*Bühel.* The forest chapel's matin bell
Chimes clearly o'er the lake from Switzerland.[3]
*Von Flüe.* The air is clear, and bears the sound so far.
*Melch.* Go, you and you, and light some broken boughs,
Let's bid them welcome with a cheerful blaze. [*Two peasants exeunt*
*Sewa.* The moon shines fair to-night. Beneath its beams
The lake reposes, bright as burnish'd steel.
*Bühel.* They'll have an easy passage.
*Wink.* [*pointing to the lake*]. Ha! look there!
See you nothing?
*Meyer.* What is it? Ay, indeed!
A rainbow in the middle of the night.
*Melch.* Formed by the bright reflection of the moon!
*Von F.* A sign most strange and wonderful, indeed!
Many there be who ne'er have seen the like.
*Sewa.* 'Tis doubled, see, a paler one above!
*Baum.* A boat is gliding yonder right beneath it.
*Melch.* That must be Werner Stauffacher! I knew
The worthy patriot would not tarry long.
*Goes with* BAUMGARTEN *towards the shore*
*Meyer.* The Uri men are like to be the last.
*Bühel.* They're forced to take a winding circuit through
The mountains, for the Viceroy's spies are out.
*In the meanwhile the two peasants have kindled a fire in the centre of the stage.*
*Melch.* [*on the shore*]. Who's there? The word?
*Stauff.* [*from below*]. Friends of the country.

*All retire up the stage, towards the party landing from the boat. Enter* STAUFFACHER, ITEL REDING, HANS AUF DER MAUER, JÖRG IM HOFE, KONRAD HUNN, ULRICH DER SCHMIDT, JOST VON WEILER, *and three other peasants, armed*
*All.* Welcome!
*While the rest remain behind, exchanging greetings,* MELCHTHAL *comes forward with* STAUFFACHER.
*Melch.* Oh worthy Stauffacher, I've look'd but now
On him, who could not look on me again.

---

[1] **A meadow . . . ground:** This is the Rütli (Rootli). The date, according to legends, is November, 1307.

[2] **Selisberg:** The village high up on the mountain of the same name above the Rütli.

[3] **Switzerland:** here, in its original meaning, the canton of Schwyz. It was not until the 16th century that the name was applied to the whole country.

I've laid my hands upon his rayless eyes,
And on their vacant orbits sworn a vow
Of vengeance, only to be cool'd in blood.
*Stauff.* Speak not of vengeance. We are here to meet
The threatened evil, not to avenge the past.
Now tell me what you've done, and what secured,
To aid the common cause in Unterwald,
How stand the peasantry disposed, and how
Yourself escaped the wiles of treachery?
*Melch.* Through the Surenen's[1] fearful mountain chain,
Where dreary ice-fields stretch on every side,
And sound is none, save the hoarse vulture's cry,
I reach'd the Alpine pasture, where the herds
From Uri and from Engelberg resort,
And turn their cattle forth to graze in common.
Still, as I went along, I slaked my thirst
With the coarse oozings of the lofty glacier,[2]
That thro' the crevices come foaming down,
And turned to rest me in the herdsmen's cots,[3]
Where I was host and guest, until I gain'd
The cheerful homes and social haunts of men.
Already through these distant vales had spread
The rumor of this last atrocity;
And whereso'er I went, at every door,
Kind words and gentle looks were there to greet me.
I found these simple spirits all in arms
Against our rulers' tyrannous encroachments.
For as their Alps through each succeeding year
Yield the same roots,—their streams flow ever on
In the same channels,—nay, the clouds and winds
The selfsame course unalterably pursue,
So have old customs there, from sire to son,
Been handed down, unchanging and unchanged;
Nor will they brook to swerve or turn aside
From the fixed even tenor of their life.
With grasp of their hard hands they welcomed me,—
Took from the walls their rusty falchions down,—
And from their eyes the soul of valor flash'd
With joyful lustre, as I spoke those names,
Sacred to every peasant in the mountains,
Your own and Walter Fürst's. Whate'er your voice
Should dictate as the right, they swore to do;
And you they swore to follow e'en to death.
—So sped I on from house to house, secure
In the guest's sacred privilege;—and when
I reached at last the valley of my home,
Where dwell my kinsmen, scatter'd far and near—
And when I found my father, stript and blind,
Upon the stranger's straw fed by the alms
Of charity——
*Stauff.* Great Heaven!
*Melch.* Yet wept I not!
No—not in weak and unavailing tears
Spent I the force of my fierce burning anguish;
Deep in my bosom, like some precious treasure,
I lock'd it fast, and thought on deeds alone.
Through every winding of the hills I crept,—
No valley so remote but I explored it;
Nay, even at the glacier's ice-clad base

---

[1] **Surenen:** The lofty ridge between Unterwalden and Uri; the pass over it leads from Altdorf to Engelberg. The Surenen Alps are covered with perpetual snow.

[2] **coarse oozings . . . glacier:** original *Gletscher Milch*, the milky white water of the glacial streams.

[3] **cots:** These are the cots, or shealings, erected by the herdsmen for shelter, while pasturing their herds on the mountains during the summer. These are left deserted in winter, during which period Melchthal's journey was taken.

I sought and found the homes of living men;
And still, where'er my wandering footsteps turn'd,
The selfsame hatred of these tyrants met me;
For even there, at vegetation's verge,
Where the numb'd earth is barren of all fruits,
Their grasping hands had been stretch'd forth for plunder.
Into the hearts of all this honest race
The story of my wrongs struck deep, and now
They, to a man, are ours; both heart and hand.
*Stauff.* Great things, indeed, you've wrought in little time.
*Melch.* I did still more than this. The fortresses,
Rossberg and Sarnen,[1] are the country's dread;
For from behind their rocky walls the foe
Swoops, as the eagle from his eyrie, down,
And, safe himself, spreads havoc o'er the land.
With my eyes I wish'd to weigh its strength,
So went to Sarnen, and explored the castle.
*Stauff.* How! Risk thyself e'en in the tiger's den?
*Melch.* Disguised in pilgrim's weeds I entered it;
I saw the Viceroy feasting at his board—
Judge if I'm master of myself or no!
I saw the tyrant and I slew him not!
*Stauff.* Fortune, indeed, has smiled upon your boldness.

*Meanwhile the others have arrived and join* MELCHTHAL *and* STAUFFACHER.

Yet tell me now, I pray, who are the friends,
The worthy men, who came along with you?
Make me acquainted with them, that we may
Speak frankly, man to man, and heart to heart.
*Meyer.* In the three Cantons, who, sir, knows not you?
Meyer of Sarnen is my name; and this
Is Struth of Winkelried, my sister's son.
*Stauff.* No unknown name. A Winkelried it was
Who slew the dragon in the fen at Weiler,[2]
And lost his life in the encounter, too.
*Wink.* That, Master Stauffacher, was my grandfather.
*Melch.* [*pointing to two peasants*]. These two are men belonging to the convent
Of Engelberg, and live behind the forest.
You'll not think ill of them because they're serfs,
And sit not free upon the soil, like us.
They love the land, and bear a good repute.
*Stauff.* [*to them*]. Give me your hands. He has good cause for thanks
That unto no man owes his body's service.
But worth is worth, no matter where 'tis found.
*Hunn.* That is Herr Reding, sir, our old Landamman.
*Meyer.* I know him well. There is a suit between us
About a piece of ancient heritage.
Herr Reding, we are enemies in court,
Here we are one.
*Shakes his hand.*
*Stauff.* That's well and bravely said.
*Wink.* Listen! They come. Hark to the horn of Uri!

*On the right and left armed men are seen descending the rocks with torches*

*Mauer.* Look, is not that God's pious servant there?
A worthy priest! The terrors of the night
And the way's pains and perils scare not him,
A faithful shepherd caring for his flock.
*Baum.* The Sacrist follows him, and Walter Fürst.
But where is Tell? I do not see him there.

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[1] Rossberg and Sarnen: the castles of the Wolfshot and the Landenberger respectively. See Act I, Sc. I, lines 130–131, (pages 481-482), and Act I, Sc. IV, line 39, (page 489).

[2] See note, Act IV, Scene II, line 139, (page 525).

*Walter Fürst, Rösselmann the Pastor, Petermann the Sacrist, Kuoni the Shepherd, Werni the Huntsman, Ruodi the Fisherman, and five other countrymen, thirty-three in all, advance and take their places round the fire.*

*Fürst.* Thus must we, on the soil our fathers left us,
Creep forth by stealth to meet like murderers,
And in the night, that should her mantle lend
Only to crime and black conspiracy,
Assert our own good rights, which yet are clear
As is the radiance of the noonday sun.
*Melch.* So be it. What is woven in gloom of night
Shall free and boldly meet the morning light.
*Rösselmann.* Confederates! listen to the words which God
Inspires my heart withal. Here we are met
To represent the general weal. In us
Are all the people of the land convened.
Then let us hold the Diet, as of old,
And as we're wont in peaceful times to do.
The time's necessity be our excuse,
If there be aught informal in this meeting.
Still, whereso'er men strike for justice, there
Is God, and now beneath his heav'n we stand.
*Stauff.* 'Tis well advised.—Let us, then, hold the Diet,
According to our ancient usages.—
Though it be night, there's sunshine in our cause.
*Melch.* Few though our numbers be, the hearts are here
Of the whole people; here the BEST[1] are met.
*Hunn.* The ancient books[2] may not be near at hand,
Yet are they graven in our inmost hearts.
*Rössel.* 'Tis well. And now, then, let a ring be formed,
And plant the swords of power within the ground.[3]
*Mauer.* Let the Landamman step into his place,
And by his side his secretaries stand.
*Sacrist.* There are three Cantons here. Which hath the right
To give the head to the united Council?
Schwyz may contest that dignity with Uri,
We Unterwald'ners enter not the field.
*Melch.* We stand aside. We are but suppliants here,
Invoking aid from our more potent friends.
*Stauff.* Let Uri have the sword. Her banner takes,
In battle, the precedence of our own.
*Fürst.* Schwyz, then, must share the honor of the sword;
For she's the honored ancestor of all.
*Rössel.* Let me arrange this generous controversy.
Uri shall lead in battle—Schwyz in Council.
*Fürst* [*gives* Stauffacher *his hand*]. Then take your place.
*Stauff.* Not I. Some older man.
*Hofe.* Ulrich, the Smith, is the most aged here.
*Mauer.* A worthy man, but he is not a freeman;
No bondman can be judge in Switzerland.
*Stauff.* Is not Herr Reding here, our old Landamman?
Where can we find a worthier man than he?
*Fürst.* Let him be Amman[4] and the Diet's chief!
You that agree with me, hold up your hands!
*All hold up their right hands.*
*Reding* [*stepping into the centre*]. I can not lay my hands upon the books;
But by yon everlasting stars I swear
Never to swerve from justice and the right.
*The two swords are placed before him, and a circle formed; Schwyz in the centre, Uri on his right, Unterwald on his left.*

---

[1] **the best:** the leaders.

[2] **The ancient books:** the statute books on which Swiss officials took oath of office.

[3] **plant . . . ground:** It was the custom at the Meetings of the Landes Gemeinde, or Diet, to set two swords upright in the ground as emblems of authority.

[4] See note, Act II, Scene I, line 66, (page 495).

*Reding* [*resting on his battle-sword*].
Why, at the hour when spirits walk the earth,
Meet the three Cantons of the mountains here,
Upon the lake's inhospitable shore?
And what the purport of the new alliance
We here contract beneath the starry heaven?

*Stauff.* [*entering the circle*]. No new alliance do we now contract,
But one our fathers framed, in ancient times,
We purpose to renew! For know, confederates,
Though mountain ridge and lake divide our bounds,
And every Canton's ruled by its own laws,
Yet are we but one race, born of one blood,
And all are children of one common home.

*Wink.* Then is the burden of our legends true,
That we came hither from a distant land?
Oh, tell us what you know, that our new league
May reap fresh vigor from the leagues of old.

*Stauff.* Hear, then, what aged herdsmen tell: There dwelt
A mighty people in the land that lies
Back to the north.[1] The scourge of famine came;
And in this strait 'twas publicly resolved
That each tenth man, on whom the lot might fall,
Should leave the country. They obey'd—and forth,
With loud lamentings, men and women went,
A mighty host; and to the south moved on,
Cutting their way through Germany by the sword,
Until they gained these pine-clad hills of ours;
Nor stopp'd they ever on their forward course
Till at the shaggy dell they halted, where
The Müta[2] flows through its luxuriant meads.
No trace of human creature met their eye,
Save one poor hut upon the desert shore,
Where dwelt a lonely man, and kept the ferry.
A tempest raged—the lake[3] rose mountains high,
And barr'd their further progress. Thereupon
They view'd the country—found it rich in wood,
Discover'd goodly springs, and felt as they
Were in their own dear native land once more.
Then they resolved to settle on the spot;
Erected there the ancient town of Schwyz;
And many a day of toil had they to clear
The tangled brake and forest's spreading roots.
Meanwhile their numbers grew, the soil became
Unequal to sustain them, and they cross'd
To the black mountain,[4] far as Weissland,[5] where,
Conceal'd behind eternal walls of ice,
Another people speak another tongue.[6]
They built the village Stanz, beside the Kernwald;
The village Altdorf, in the vale of Reuss;[7]
Yet, ever mindful of their parent stem,
The men of Schwyz, from all the stranger race,
That since that time have settled in the land,
Each other recognize. Their hearts still know,
And beat fraternally to kindred blood.
*Extends his hand right and left.*

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[1] **land . . . north:** Sweden.

[2] **The Müta:** the Muotta, a river emptying into Lake Lucerne near Brunnen.

[3] **the lake:** Lake Lucerne.

[4] **the black mountain:** the Brünig Pass (3379 feet high) between Unterwalden and the Bernese Oberland (The Bern Alps).

[5] **Weissland:** the valley of the Aar, south of the Brünig.

[6] **another tongue:** French and Italian are spoken in this part of Switzerland.

[7] **Reuss:** the swirling river on the "Road of Terror" over the St. Gothard Pass. See Act V, Scene II, l. 161 (pages 540-541). From the mountain passes the Reuss flows into the Lake of Lucerne, at Flüelen, and issues out at the northwestern end, where stands the city of Lucerne.

*Mauer*. Ay, we are all one heart, one blood, one race!
*All* [*joining hands*]. We are one people, and will act as one.
*Stauff*. The nations round us bear a foreign yoke,
For they have yielded to the conqueror.
Nay, e'en within our frontiers may be found
Some that owe villein service to a lord,
A race of bonded serfs from sire to son.
But we, the genuine race of ancient Swiss,
Have kept our freedom from the first till now.
Never to princes have we bow'd the knee;
Freely we sought protection of the Empire.
*Rössel*. Freely we sought it—freely it was given.
'Tis so set down in Emperor Frederick's charter.[1]
*Stauff*. For the most free have still some feudal lord.
There must be still a chief, a judge supreme,
To whom appeal may lie, in case of strife.
And therefore was it that our sires allow'd,
For what they had recover'd from the waste,
This honor to the Emperor, the lord
Of all the German and Italian soil;
And, like the other free men of his realm,
Engaged to aid him with their swords in war;
And this alone should be the free man's duty,
To guard the Empire that keeps guard for him.
*Melch*. He's but a slave that would acknowledge more.
*Stauff*. They followed, when the Heribann[2] went forth,
The imperial standard, and they fought its battles!
To Italy they march'd in arms, to place
The Cæsars' crown upon the Emperor's head.
But still at home they ruled themselves in peace,
By their own laws and ancient usages.
The Emperor's only right was to adjudge
The penalty of death; he therefore named
Some mighty noble as his delegate,
That had no stake nor interest in the land
He was call'd in,[3] when doom was to be pass'd,
And, in the face of day, pronounced decree
Clear and distinctly, fearing no man's hate.
What traces, here, that we are bondsmen? Speak,
If there be any can gainsay my words!
*Hofe*. No! You have spoken but the simple truth;
We never stoop'd beneath a tyrant's yoke.
*Stauff*. Even to the Emperor we refused obedience,
When he gave judgment in the church's favor;
For when the Abbey of Einsiedlen[4] claimed
The Alp our fathers and ourselves had grazed,
And showed an ancient charter, which bestowed
The land on them as being ownerless—
For our existence there had been concealed—
What was our answer? This. "The grant is void,
No Emperor can bestow what is our own:
And if the Empire shall deny us justice,
We can, within our mountains, right ourselves!"
Thus spake our fathers! And shall we endure
The shame and infamy of this new yoke,
And from the vassal brook what never king
Dared, in the fulness of his power, attempt?

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[1] **in Emperor . . . charter:** granted by Frederick II after the battle of Faenza. See Act II, Scene I, line 168 (page 497).

[2] **Heribann:** The Heribann was a muster of warriors similar to the *arrière ban* of France.

[3] **call'd in:** The royal governors were not allowed to reside within the cantons. Gessler, by doing so, roused the people against him all the more.

[4] **Abbey of Einsiedlen:** in 1018. The Emperor was Henry V.

This soil we have created for ourselves,
By the hard labor of our hands; we've changed
The giant forest, that was erst the haunt
Of savage bears, into a home for man;
Extirpated the dragon's brood, that wont
To rise, distent with venom, from the swamps;
Rent the thick misty canopy that hung
Its blighting vapors on the dreary waste;
Blasted the solid rock; o'er the abyss
Thrown the firm bridge[1] for the wayfaring man:
By the possession of a thousand years
The soil is ours. And shall an alien lord,
Himself a vassal, dare to venture here,
On our own hearths insult us,—and attempt
To forge the chains of bondage for our hands,
And do us shame on our own proper soil?
Is there no help against such wrong as this?
[*Great sensation among the people.*]
Yes! there's a limit to the despot's power!
When the oppress'd looks round in vain for justice,
When his sore burden may no more be borne,
With fearless heart he makes appeal to Heaven,
And thence brings down his everlasting rights,
Which there abide, inalienably his,
And indestructible as are the stars.
Nature's primeval state returns again,
Where man stands hostile to his fellow man;
And if all other means shall fail his need,
One last resource remains—his own good sword.
Our dearest treasures call to us for aid
Against the oppressor's violence; we stand
For country, home, for wives, for children here!

*All* [*clashing their swords*]. Here stand we for our homes, our wives, and children.

*Rössel.* [*stepping into the circle*]. Bethink ye well before ye draw the sword.
Some peaceful compromise may yet be made;
Speak but one word, and at your feet you'll see
The men who now oppress you. Take the terms
That have been often tendered you; renounce
The Empire, and to Austria swear allegiance!

*Mauer.* What says the priest? To Austria allegiance?

*Buhel.* Hearken not to him!

*Wink.* 'Tis a traitor's counsel,
His country's foe!

*Reding.* Peace, peace, confederates.

*Sewa.* Homage to Austria, after wrongs like these!

*Von F.* Shall Austria extort from us by force
What we denied to kindness and entreaty?

*Meyer.* Then should we all be slaves, deservedly.

*Mauer.* Yes! Let him forfeit all a Switzer's rights,
Who talks of yielding to the yoke of Austria!
I stand on this, Landamman. Let this be
The foremost of our laws!

*Melch.* Even so! Whoe'er
Shall talk of tamely bearing Austria's yoke,
Let him be stripp'd of all his rights and honors;
And no man hence receive him at his hearth!

*All* [*raising their right hands*]. Agreed! Be this the law!

*Reding* [*after a pause*]. The law it is.

*Rössel.* Now you are free—by this law you are free.
Never shall Austria obtain by force
What she has fail'd to gain by friendly suit.

*Weiler.* On with the order of the day! Proceed!

---

[1] **the firm bridge:** alluding especially to the Devil's Bridge (*Teufelsbrücke*) over the Reuss that made the St. Gothard Pass accessible, and so opened this route to Italy, See Act V, Scene II, line 174, (page 541).

*Reding.* Confederates! Have all gentler means been tried?
Perchance the Emp'ror knows not of our wrongs;
It may not be his will that thus we suffer:
Were it not well to make one last attempt,
And lay our grievances before the throne,
Ere we unsheath the sword? Force is at best
A fearful thing e'en in a righteous cause;
God only helps when man can help no more.
*Stauff.* [*to* Konrad Hunn]. Here, you
can give us information. Speak!
*Hunn.* I was at Rheinfeld, at the Emperor's palace,
Deputed by the Cantons to complain
Of the oppressions of these governors,
And claim the charter of our ancient freedom,
Which each new king till now has ratified.
I found the envoys there of many a town,
From Suabia[1] and the valley of the Rhine,
Who all received their parchments as they wish'd
And straight went home again with merry heart.
They sent for me, your envoy, to the council,
Where I was soon dismiss'd with empty comfort;
"The Emperor at present was engaged;
Some other time he would attend to us!"
I turn'd away, and passing through the hall,
With heavy heart, in a recess I saw
The Grand Duke John[2] in tears, and by his side
The noble lords of Wart and Tegerfeld,
Who beckon'd me, and said, "Redress yourselves!
Expect not justice from the Emperor.
Does he not plunder his own brother's child,
And keep from him his just inheritance?
The Duke claims his maternal property,
Urging he's now of age, and 'tis full time
That he should rule his people and dominions;
What is the answer made to him? The king
Places a chaplet on his head; 'Behold
The fitting ornament,' he cries, 'of youth!' "
*Mauer.* You hear. Expect not from the Emperor
Or right or justice! Then redress yourselves!
*Reding.* No other course is left us. Now, advise
What plan most likely to ensure success.
*Fürst.* To shake a thraldom off that we abhor,
To keep our ancient rights inviolate,
As we received them from our fathers,—this,
Not lawless innovation, is our aim.
Let Cæsar still retain what is his due;
And he that is a vassal, let him pay
The service he is sworn to faithfully.
*Meyer.* I hold my land of Austria in fief.
*Fürst.* Continue, then, to pay your feudal service.
*Weil.* I'm tenant of the lords of Rappersweil.
*Fürst.* Continue, then, to pay them rent and tithe.
*Rössel.* Of Zürich's Lady[3] I'm the humble vassal.
*Fürst.* Give to the cloister what the cloister claims.
*Stauff.* The Empire only is my feudal lord.
*Fürst.* What needs must be we'll do, but nothing further.
We'll drive these tyrants and their minions hence,
And raze their towering strongholds to the ground,
Yet shed, if possible, no drop of blood.
Let the Emperor see that we were driven to cast
The sacred duties of respect away;
And when he finds we keep within our bounds,
His wrath, belike, may yield to policy;

---

[1] **Suabia:** A mediæval German duchy (Swabia).

[2] **Grand Duke John:** The Duke of Suabia, who soon afterwards assassinated his uncle, for withholding his patrimony from him.

[3] **Of . . . Lady:** Nunnery of Our Lady; or the abbess of the convent.

For truly is that nation to be fear'd
That, when in arms, is temp'rate in its wrath.
*Reding.* But prithee tell us how may this be done?
The enemy is arm'd as well as we,
And, rest assured, he will not yield in peace.
*Stauff.* He will, whene'er he sees us up in arms;
We shall surprise him, ere he is prepared.
*Meyer.* 'Tis easily said, but not so easily done.
Two fortresses of strength command the country—
They shield the foe, and should the King invade us,
The task would then be dangerous indeed.
Rossberg and Sarnen both must be secured,
Before a sword is drawn in either Canton.
*Stauff.* Should we delay the foe will soon be warned;
We are too numerous for secrecy.
*Meyer.* There is no traitor in the Forest States.
*Rössel.* But even zeal may heedlessly betray.
*Fürst.* Delay it longer, and the keep at Altdorf
Will be complete,—the governor secure.
*Meyer.* You think but of yourselves.
*Sacrist.* You are unjust!
*Meyer.* Unjust! said you? Dares Uri taunt us so?
*Reding.* Peace, on your oath![1]
*Meyer.* If Schwyz be leagued with Uri,
Why, then, indeed, we must perforce be silent.
*Reding.* And let me tell you, in the Diet's name,
Your hasty spirit much disturbs the peace.
Stand we not all for the same common cause?
*Wink.* What if we delay till Christmas? 'Tis then
The custom for the serfs to throng the castle,
Bringing the governor their annual gifts.
Thus may some ten or twelve selected men
Assemble unobserved, within its walls,
Bearing about their persons pikes of steel,
Which may be quickly mounted upon staves,
For arms are not admitted to the fort.
The rest can fill the neighboring wood, prepared
To sally forth upon a trumpet's blast,
Whene'er their comrades have secured the gate;
And thus the castle will be ours with ease.
*Melch.* The Rossberg I will undertake to scale.
I have a sweetheart in the garrison,
Whom with some tender words I could persuade
To lower me at night a hempen ladder.
Once up, my friends will not be long behind.
*Reding.* Are all resolved in favor of delay?
*The majority raise their hands.*
*Stauff.* [*counting them*]. Twenty to twelve is the majority.
*Fürst.* If on the appointed day the castles fall,
From mountain on to mountain we shall pass
The fiery signal: in the capital
Of every Canton quickly rouse the Landsturm.[2]
Then, when these tyrants see our martial front,
Believe me, they will never make so bold
As risk the conflict, but will gladly take
Safe conduct forth beyond our boundaries.
*Stauff.* Not so with Gessler. He will make a stand.
Surrounded with his dread array of horse,
Blood will be shed before he quits the field,
And even expell'd he'd still be terrible.
'Tis hard, indeed 'tis dangerous, to spare him.
*Baum.* Place me where'er a life is to be lost;

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[1] **oath:** the oath of allegiance to the Swiss constitution, taken by every boy at the age of sixteen.

[2] **Landsturm:** A sort of national militia.

I owe my life to Tell, and cheerfully
Will pledge it for my country. I have clear'd
My honor, and my heart is now at rest.
*Reding.* Counsel will come with circumstance. Be patient!
Something must still be trusted to the moment.
Yet, while by night we hold our Diet here,
The morning, see, has on the mountain tops
Kindled her glowing beacon. Let us part
Ere the broad sun surprise us.
*Fürst.* Do not fear.
The night wanes slowly from these vales of ours.

*All have involuntarily taken off their caps, and contemplate the breaking of day, absorbed in silence.*

*Rössel.* By this fair light which greeteth us, before
Those other nations, that beneath us far,
In noisome cities pent, draw painful breath,
Swear we the oath of our confederacy!
We swear to be a nation of true brothers,
Never to part in danger or in death!
[*They repeat his words with three fingers*[1] *raised.*]
We swear we will be free, as were our sires,
And sooner die than live in slavery!
[*All repeat as before.*]
We swear to put our trust in God Most High,
And not to quail before the might of man!
[*All repeat as before, and embrace each other.*]
*Stauff.* Now every man pursue his several way
Back to his friends, his kindred, and his home.
Let the herd[2] winter up his flock, and gain,
In silence, friends for our confederacy!
What for a time must be endured, endure,
And let the reckoning of the tyrants grow,
Till the great day arrive when they shall pay
The general and particular debt at once.
Let every man control his own just rage,
And nurse his vengeance for the public wrongs;
For he whom selfish interests now engage
Defrauds the general weal of what to it belongs.

[*As they are going off in profound silence, in three different directions, the orchestra plays a solemn air. The empty scene remains open for some time, showing the rays of the sun rising over the Glaciers.*

## ACT III

### Scene I

*Court before* Tell's *house.* Tell *with an axe.* Hedwig *engaged in her domestic duties.* Walter *and* Wilhelm *in the background, playing with a little cross-bow.*

*Walter* [*sings*].

With his cross-bow and his quiver,
The huntsman speeds his way,
Over mountain, dale, and river,
At the dawning of the day.

As the eagle, on wild pinion,
Is the king in realms of air,
So the hunter claims dominion
Over crag and forest lair.

Far as ever bow can carry,
Thro' the trackless airy space,
All he sees he makes his quarry,
Soaring bird and beast of chase.

*Wilhelm* [*runs forward*]. My string has snapt! Wilt mend it for me, father?
*Tell.* Not I; a true born archer helps himself. [*Boys retire*

*Hedwig.* The boys begin to use the bow betimes.
*Tell.* 'Tis early practice only makes the master.
*Hedw.* Ah! Would to Heaven they never learnt the art!
*Tell.* But they shall learn it, wife, in all its points.
Whoe'er would carve an independent way
Through life, must learn to ward or plant a blow.

---

[1] **three fingers:** An old custom, symbolic of the Trinity.

[2] **herd:** herdsman.

*Hedw.* Alas, alas! and they will never rest
Contentedly at home.
*Tell.* No more can I!
I was not framed by nature for a shepherd.
Restless I must pursue a changing course;
I only feel the flush and joy of life
In starting some fresh quarry every day.
*Hedw.* Heedless the while of all your wife's alarms,
As she sits watching through long hours at home
For my soul sinks with terror at the tales
The servants tell about your wild adventures.
Whene'er we part, my trembling heart forebodes
That you will ne'er come back to me again.
I see you on the frozen mountain steeps,
Missing, perchance, your leap from cliff to cliff.
I see the chamois, with a wild rebound,
Drag you down with him o'er the precipice.
I see the avalanche close o'er your head,—
The treacherous ice give way, and you sink down
Entombed alive within its hideous gulf.
Ah! in a hundred varying forms does death
Pursue the Alpine huntsman on his course.
That way of life can surely ne'er be blessed
Where life and limb are perill'd every hour.
*Tell.* The man that bears a quick and steady eye,
And trusts to God and his own lusty sinews,
Passes, with scarce a scar, through every danger.
The mountain cannot awe the mountain child.
[*Having finished his work, he lays aside his tools.*]
And now, methinks, the door will hold awhile.—
The axe at home oft saves the carpenter.
*Takes his cap.*
*Hedw.* Whither away?
*Tell.* To Altdorf,[1] to your father.
*Hedw.* You have some dangerous enterprise in view?
Confess!
*Tell.* Why think you so?
*Hedw.* Some scheme's on foot,
Against the governors. There was a Diet
Held on the Rootli—that I know—and you
Are one of the confederacy, I'm sure.
*Tell.* I was not there. Yet will I not hold back,
Whene'er my country calls me to her aid.
*Hedw.* Wherever danger is, will you be placed.
On you, as ever, will the burden fall.
*Tell.* Each man shall have the post that fits his powers.
*Hedw.* You took—ay, 'mid the thickest of the storm—
The man of Unterwald across the lake.
'Tis a marvel you escaped. Had you no thought
Of wife and children, then?
*Tell.* Dear wife, I had;
And therefore saved the father for his children.
*Hedw.* To brave the lake in all its wrath! 'Twas not
To put your trust in God! 'Twas tempting him.
*Tell.* The man that's over cautious will do little.
*Hedw.* Yes, you've a kind and helping hand for all;
But be in straits, and who will lend you aid?
*Tell.* God grant I ne'er may stand in need of it!
*Takes up his cross-bow and arrows.*
*Hedw.* Why take your cross-bow with you? Leave it here.
*Tell.* I want my right hand, when I want my bow.

*The boys return*

*Walt.* Where, father, are you going?
*Tell.* To granddad, boy—
To Altdorf. Will you go?
*Walt.* Ay, that I will!

---

[1] Altdorf: only a mile away.

*Hedw.* The Viceroy's there just now. Go not to Altdorf!
*Tell.* He leaves to-day.
*Hedw.* Then let him first be gone.
Cross not his path.—You know he bears us grudge.
*Tell.* His ill-will cannot greatly injure me.
I do what's right, and care for no man's hate.
*Hedw.* 'Tis those who do what's right whom most he hates.
*Tell.* Because he cannot reach them. Me, I ween,
His knightship will be glad to leave in peace.
*Hedw.* Ay!—Are you sure of that?
*Tell.* Not long ago,
As I was hunting through the wild ravines
Of Schechenthal,[1] untrod by mortal foot,—
There, as I took my solitary way
Along a shelving ledge of rocks, where 'twas
Impossible to step on either side;
For high above rose, like a giant wall,
The precipice's side, and far below
The Schechen thunder'd o'er its rifted bed;—
[*The boys press towards him, looking upon him with excited curiosity.*]
There, face to face, I met the Viceroy. He
Alone with me—and I myself alone—
Mere man to man, and near us the abyss.
And when his lordship had perused my face,
And knew the man he had severely fined
On some most trivial ground, not long before,
And saw me, with my sturdy bow in hand,
Come striding towards him, then his cheek grew pale,
His knees refused their office, and I thought
He would have sunk against the mountain side.
Then, touch'd with pity for him, I advanced
Respectfully, and said, "'Tis I, my lord."
But ne'er a sound could he compel his lips
To frame in answer. Only with his hand
He beckoned me in silence to proceed.
So I pass'd on, and sent his train to seek him.
*Hedw.* He trembled then before you? Woe the while
You saw his weakness; that he'll ne'er forgive.
*Tell.* I shun him, therefore, and he'll not seek me.
*Hedw.* But stay away to-day. Go hunting rather!
*Tell.* What do you fear?
*Hedw.* I am uneasy. Stay.
*Tell.* Why thus distress yourself without a cause?
*Hedw.* Because there is no cause. Tell, Tell! stay here!
*Tell.* Dear wife, I gave my promise I would go.
*Hedw.* Must you,—then go. But leave the boys with me.
*Walt.* No, mother dear, I'm going with my father.
*Hedw.* How, Walter! will you leave your mother then?
*Walt.* I'll bring you pretty things from grandpapa.
[*Exit with his father*

*Wilh.* Mother, I'll stay with you!
*Hedw.* [*embracing him*]. Yes, Yes! thou art
My own dear child. Thou'rt all that's left to me.
[*She goes to the gate of the court, and looks anxiously after* TELL *and her son for a considerable time.*

### SCENE II

*A retired part of the Forest.—Brooks dashing in spray over the rocks.*

*Enter* BERTHA *in a hunting dress. Immediately afterwards* RUDENZ

*Berth.* He follows me. Now to explain myself!
*Rud.* [*entering hastily*]. At length, dear lady, we have met alone.

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[1] ravines . . . Schechenthal: The valley in which Bürglen lies.

In this wild dell, with rocks on every side,
No jealous eye can watch our interview.
Now let my heart throw off this weary silence.
*Berth.* But are you sure they will not follow us?
*Rud.* See, yonder goes the chase. Now, then, or never!
I must avail me of the precious moment,—
Must hear my doom decided by thy lips,
Though it should part me from thy side for ever.
Oh, do not arm that gentle face of thine
With looks so stern and harsh! Who—who am I,
That dare aspire so high as unto thee?
Fame hath not stamp’d me yet; nor may I take
My place amid the courtly throng of knights
That, crown’d with glory’s lustre, woo thy smiles.
Nothing have I to offer but a heart
That overflows with truth and love for thee.
*Berth.* [*sternly and with severity*]. And dare you speak to me of love—of truth?
You, that art faithless to your nearest ties!
You, that are Austria’s slave—bartered and sold
To her—an alien, and your country’s tyrant!
*Rud.* How! This reproach from thee! Whom do I seek,
On Austria’s side, my own beloved, but thee?
*Berth.* Think you to find me in the traitor’s ranks?
Now, as I live, I’d rather give my hand
To Gessler’s self, all despot though he be,
Than to the Switzer who forgets his birth
And stoops to be the minion of a tyrant.
*Rud.* Oh, Heaven, what must I hear!
*Berth.* Say! what can lie
Nearer the good man’s heart, than friends and kindred?
What dearer duty to a noble soul
Than to protect weak, suffering innocence,
And vindicate the rights of the oppress’d?
My very soul bleeds for your countrymen.
I suffer with them, for I needs must love them;
They are so gentle, yet so full of power;
They draw my whole heart to them. Every day
I look upon them with increased esteem.
But you, whom nature and your knightly vow
Have given them as their natural protector,
Yet who desert them and abet their foes
In forging shackles for your native land,
You—you it is that deeply grieve and wound me.
I must constrain my heart, or I shall hate you.
*Rud.* Is not my country’s welfare all my wish?
What seek I for her but to purchase peace
’Neath Austria’s potent sceptre?
*Berth.* Bondage, rather!
You would drive freedom from the last stronghold
That yet remains for her upon the earth.
The people know their own true int’rests better:
Their simple natures are not warp’d by show.
But round your head a tangling net is wound.
*Rud.* Bertha, you hate me—you despise me!
*Berth.* Nay!
And if I did, ’twere better for my peace.
But to see him despised and despicable,—
The man whom one might love—
*Rud.* Oh, Bertha! You
Show me the pinnacle of heavenly bliss,
Then, in a moment, hurl me to despair!
*Berth.* No, no! the noble is not all extinct
Within you. It but slumbers,—I will rouse it.

It must have cost you many a fiery struggle
To crush the virtues of your race within you.
But, Heaven be praised, 'tis mightier than yourself,
And you are noble in your own despite!
*Rud.* You trust me, then? Oh, Bertha, with thy love
What might I not become!
*Berth.* Be only that
For which your own high nature destin'd you.
Fill the position you were born to fill;—
Stand by your people and your native land—
And battle for your sacred rights!
*Rud.* Alas!
How can I hope to win you—to possess you,
If I take arms against the Emperor?
Will not your potent kinsmen interpose,
To dictate the disposal of your hand?
*Berth.* All my estates lie in the Forest Cantons,
And I am free when Switzerland is free.
*Rud.* Oh! what a prospect, Bertha, hast thou shown me!
*Berth.* Hope not to win my hand by Austria's favor;
Fain would they lay their grasp on my estates,
To swell the vast domains which now they hold.
The selfsame lust of conquest that would rob
You of your liberty endangers mine.
Oh, friend, I'm mark'd for sacrifice;—to be
The guerdon of some parasite, perchance!
They'll drag me hence to the Imperial court,
That hateful haunt of falsehood and intrigue;
There do detested marriage bonds await me.
Love, love alone,—your love can rescue me.
*Rud.* And thou couldst be content, love, to live here;
In my own native land to be my own?
Oh, Bertha, all the yearnings of my soul
For this great world and its tumultuous strife,
What were they but a yearning after thee?
In glory's path I sought for thee alone,
And all my thirst of fame was only love.
But if in this calm vale thou canst abide
With me, and bid earth's pomps and pride adieu,
Then is the goal of my ambition won,
And the rough tide of the tempestuous world
May dash and rave around these firm-set hills!
No wandering wishes more have I to send
Forth to the busy scene that stirs beyond.
Then may these rocks, that girdle us, extend
Their giant walls impenetrably round,
And this sequestered happy vale alone
Look up to heaven, and be my paradise!
*Berth.* Now art thou all my fancy dream'd of thee.
My trust has not been given to thee in vain.
*Rud.* Away, ye idle phantoms of my folly!
In mine own home I'll find my happiness.
Here, where the gladsome boy to manhood grew,
Where ev'ry brook, and tree, and mountain peak
Teems with remembrances of happy hours,
In mine own native land thou wilt be mine.
Ah, I have ever loved it well. I feel
How poor without it were all earthly joys.
*Berth.* Where should we look for happiness on earth,
If not in this dear land of innocence?
Here, where old truth hath its familiar home,
Where fraud and guile are strangers, envy ne'er
Shall dim the sparkling fountain of our bliss,

And ever bright the hours shall o'er us glide.
There do I see thee, in true manly worth,
The foremost of the free and of thy peers,
Revered with homage pure and unconstrain'd,
Wielding a power that kings might envy thee.
*Rud.* And thee I see, thy sex's crowning gem,
With thy sweet woman grace and wakeful love,
Building a heaven for me within my home,
And, as the spring-time scatters forth her flowers,
Adorning with thy charms my path of life,
And spreading joy and sunshine all around.
*Berth.* And this it was, dear friend, that caused my grief,
To see thee blast this life's supremest bliss
With thine own hand. Ah! what had been my fate
Had I been forced to follow some proud lord,
Some ruthless despot, to his gloomy castle!
Here are no castles, here no bastion'd walls
Divide me from a people I can bless.
*Rud.* Yet, how to free myself; to loose the coils
Which I have madly twined around my head?
*Berth.* Tear them asunder with a man's resolve.
Whatever the event, stand by thy people.
It is thy post by birth.
[*Hunting-horns are heard in the distance.*]
But hark! The chase!
Farewell,—'tis needful we should part—away!
Fight for thy land; thou fightest for thy love.
One foe fills all our souls with dread; the blow
That makes one free emancipates us all.
[*Exeunt severally*

## SCENE III[1]

*A meadow near Altdorf. Trees in the foreground. At the back of the stage a cap upon a pole. The prospect is bounded by the Bannberg,*[2] *which is surmounted by a snow-capped mountain.*

FRIESSHARDT *and* LEUTHOLD *on guard*

*Friesshardt.* We keep our watch in vain. There's not a soul
Will pass, and do obeisance to the cap.
But yesterday the place swarm'd like a fair;
Now the whole green looks like a very desert,
Since yonder scarecrow hung upon the pole.
*Leuthold.* Only the vilest rabble show themselves,
And wave their tattered caps in mockery at us.
All honest citizens would sooner make
A tedious circuit over half the town
Than bend their backs before our master's cap.
*Friess.* They were obliged to pass this way at noon,
As they were coming from the Council House.
I counted then upon a famous catch,
For no one thought of bowing to the cap.
But Rösselmann, the priest, was even with me:
Coming just then from some sick penitent,
He stands before the pole,—raises the Host—
The Sacrist,[3] too, must tinkle with his bell,—
When down they dropp'd on knee—myself and all,
In reverence to the Host, but not the cap.
*Leuth.* Hark ye, companion, I've a shrewd suspicion
Our post's no better than the pillory.
It is a burning shame, a trooper should
Stand sentinel before an empty cap,
And every honest fellow must despise us

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[1] **Scene III:** Traditionally on November 18.
[2] **Bannberg:** A wooded hill east of Altdorf.
[3] **Sacrist:** sacristan.

To do obeisance to a cap, too! Faith,
I never heard an order so absurd!
*Friess.* Why not, an't please thee, to an empty cap?
Thou'st duck'd, I'm sure, to many an empty sconce.[1]

Hildegard, Mechthild *and* Elsbeth *enter with their children, and station themselves around the pole*

*Leuth.* And thou art an officious sneaking knave,
That's fond of bringing honest folks to trouble.
For my part, he that likes, may pass the cap:—
I'll shut my eyes and take no note of him.
*Mechthild.* There hangs the Viceroy! Your obeisance, children!
*Elsbeth.* I would to God he'd go, and leave his cap!
The country would be none the worse for it.
*Friess.* [*driving them away*]. Out of the way! Confounded pack of gossips!
Who sent for you? Go, send your husbands here,
If they have courage to defy the order.

Tell *enters with his cross-bow, leading his son* Walter *by the hand. They pass the hat without noticing it and advance to the front of the stage*

*Walt.* [*pointing to the Bannberg*]. Father, is't true that on the mountain there
The trees, if wounded with a hatchet, bleed?
*Tell.* Who says so, boy?
*Walt.* The master herdsman, father!
He tells us there's a charm upon the trees,
And if a man shall injure them, the hand
That struck the blow will grow from out the grave.
*Tell.* There is a charm about them—that's the truth.
Dost see those glaciers yonder—those white horns—
That seem to melt away into the sky?
*Walt.* They are the peaks that thunder so at night,
And send the avalanches down upon us.
*Tell.* They are; and Altdorf long ago had been
Submerged beneath these avalanches' weight
Did not the forest there above the town
Stand like a bulwark to arrest their fall.
*Walt.* [*after musing a little*]. And are there countries with no mountains, father?
*Tell.* Yes; if we travel downwards from our heights,
And keep descending in the river's courses,
We reach a wide and level country, where
Our mountain torrents brawl and foam no more,
And fair large rivers glide serenely on.
All quarters of the heaven may there be scann'd
Without impediment. The corn grows there
In broad and lovely fields, and all the land
Is fair as any garden to the view.
*Walt.* But, father, tell me, wherefore haste we not
Away to this delightful land, instead
Of toiling here, and struggling as we do?
*Tell.* The land is fair and bountiful as heaven;
But they who till it never may enjoy
The fruits of what they sow.
*Walt.* Live they not free,
As you do, on the land their fathers left them?
*Tell.* The fields are all the bishop's or the king's.
*Walt.* But they may freely hunt among the woods?
*Tell.* The game is all the monarch's—bird and beast.
*Walt.* But they, at least, may surely fish the streams?
*Tell.* Stream, lake, and sea, all to the king belong.
*Walt.* Who is this king, of whom they're so afraid?
*Tell.* He is the man who fosters and protects them.

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[1] empty sconce: empty noddle.

*Walt.* Have they not courage to protect themselves?
*Tell.* The neighbor there dare not his neighbor trust.
*Walt.* I should want breathing room in such a land.
I'd rather dwell beneath the avalanches.
*Tell.* 'Tis better, child, to have these glacier peaks
Behind one's back, than evil-minded men!

*They are about to pass on.*

*Walt.* See, father, see the cap on yonder pole!
*Tell.* What is the cap to us? Come, let's begone.

*As he is going,* Friesshardt, *presenting his pike, stops him.*

*Friess.* Stand, I command you, in the Emperor's name!
*Tell* [*seizing the pike*]. What would ye? Wherefore do you stop my path?
*Friess.* You've broke the mandate, and must go with us.
*Leuth.* You have not done obeisance to the cap.
*Tell.* Friend, let me go.
*Friess.* Away, away to prison!
*Walt.* Father to prison? Help! [*Calling to the side scene.*] This way, you men!
Good people, help! They're dragging him to prison!

Rösselmann *the Priest, and the* Sacristan, *with three other men, enter*

*Sacrist.* What's here amiss?
*Rössel.* Why do you seize this man?
*Friess.* He is an enemy of the King—a traitor.
*Tell* [*seizing him with violence*]. A traitor, I!
*Rössel.* Friend, thou art wrong. 'Tis Tell,
An honest man and worthy citizen.
*Walt.* [*descries* Fürst *and runs up to him*]. Grandfather, help, they want to seize my father!
~~*Friess.*~~ Away to prison!
*Fürst* [*running in*]. Stay, I offer bail.
For God's sake, Tell, what is the matter here?

Melchthal *and* Stauffacher *enter*

*Leuth.* He has contemn'd the Viceroy's sovereign power,
Refusing flatly to acknowledge it.
*Stauff.* Has Tell done this?
*Melch.* Villain, thou knowest 'tis false!
*Leuth.* He has not made obeisance to the cap.
*Fürst.* And shall for this to prison? Come, my friend,
Take my security and let him go.
*Friess.* Keep your security for yourself—you'll need it.
We only do our duty. Hence with him.
*Melch.* [*to the country people*]. This is too bad—shall we stand by and see them
Drag him away before our very eyes?
*Sacrist.* We are the strongest. Don't endure it, friends.
Our countrymen will back us to a man.
*Friess.* Who dares resist the governor's commands?
*Other Three Peasants* [*running in*]. We'll help you. What's the matter? Down with them!

Hildegard, Mechthild *and* Elsbeth *return*

*Tell.* Go, go, good people, I can help myself.
Think you, had I a mind to use my strength,
These pikes of theirs should daunt me?
*Melch.* [*to* Friesshardt]. Only try—
Try, if you dare, to force him from amongst us.
*Fürst* and *Stauff.* Peace, peace, friends!
*Friess.* [*loudly*]. Riot! Insurrection, ho!

*Hunting-horns without.*

*Women.* The Governor!
*Friess.* [*raising his voice*]. Rebellion! Mutiny!
*Stauff.* Roar, till you burst, knave!
*Rössel.* and *Melch.* Will you hold your tongue?
*Friess.* [*calling still louder*]. Help, help, I say, the servants of the law!
*Fürst.* The Viceroy here! Then we shall smart for this!

*Enter* GESSLER *on horseback, with a falcon on his wrist;* RUDOLPH DER HARRAS, BERTHA *and* RUDENZ, *and a numerous train of armed attendants, who form a circle of lances round the whole stage.*

*Harras.* Room for the Viceroy!
*Gessler.* Drive the clowns apart.
Why throng the people thus? Who calls for help?
[*General silence.*]
Who was it? I will know.
[FRIESSHARDT *steps forward.*]
And who art thou?
And why hast thou this man in custody?
*Gives his falcon to an attendant.*
*Friess.* Dread sir, I am a soldier of your guard,
And station'd sentinel beside the cap;
This man I apprehended in the act
Of passing it without obeisance due,
So I arrested him, as you gave order,
Whereon the people tried to rescue him.
*Gessl.* [*after a pause*]. And do you, Tell, so lightly hold your king,
And me, who act as his vicegerent here,
That you refuse the greeting to the cap
I hung aloft to test your loyalty?
I read in this a disaffected spirit.
*Tell.* Pardon me, good my lord! The action sprung
From inadvertence,—not from disrespect.
Were I discreet, I were not William Tell:
Forgive me now—I'll not offend again.
*Gessl.* [*after a pause*]. I hear, Tell, you're a master with the bow,—
And bear the palm away from every rival.
*Walt.* That must be true, sir! At a hundred yards
He'll shoot an apple for you off the tree.
*Gessl.* Is that boy thine, Tell?
*Tell.* Yes, my gracious lord.
*Gessl.* Hast any more of them?
*Tell.* Two boys, my lord.
*Gessl.* And, of the two, which dost thou love the most?
*Tell.* Sir, both the boys are dear to me alike.
*Gessl.* Then, Tell, since at a hundred yards thou canst
Bring down the apple from the tree, thou shalt
Approve thy skill before me. Take thy bow—
Thou hast it there at hand—and make thee ready
To shoot an apple from the stripling's head!
But take this counsel,—look well to thine aim,
See that thou hitt'st the apple at the first,
For, shouldst thou miss, thy head shall pay the forfeit.
*All give signs of horror.*
*Tell.* What monstrous thing, my lord, is this you ask?
That I, from the head of mine own child!—No, no!
It cannot be, kind sir, you meant not that—
God, in His grace, forbid! You could not ask
A father seriously to do that thing!
*Gessl.* Thou art to shoot an apple from his head!
I do desire—command it so.
*Tell.* What! I
Level my cross-bow at the darling head
Of mine own child? No—rather let me die!
*Gessl.* Or thou must shoot, or with thee dies the boy.
*Tell.* Shall I become the murd'rer of my child!
You have no children, sir—you do not know
The tender throbbings of a father's heart.
*Gessl.* How now, Tell, so discreet upon a sudden?
I had been told thou wert a visionary,—
A wanderer from the paths of common men.
Thou lov'st the marvellous. So have I now
Cull'd out for thee a task of special daring.
Another man might pause and hesitate;—
Thou dashest at it, heart and soul, at once.
*Berth.* Oh, do not jest, my lord, with these poor souls!
See, how they tremble, and how pale they look,
So little used are they to hear thee jest.

*Gessl.* Who tells thee that I jest? [*Grasping a branch above his head.*]
Here is the apple.
Room there, I say! And let him take his distance—
Just eighty paces,—as the custom is,—
Not an inch more or less! It was his boast
That at a hundred he could hit his man.
Now, archer, to your task, and look you miss not!
*Har.* Heavens! this grows serious—down, boy, on your knees,
And beg the governor to spare your life.
*Fürst* [*aside to* MELCHTHAL, *who can scarcely restrain his impatience*]. Command yourself,—be calm, I beg of you!
*Berth.* [*to the governor*]. Let this suffice you, sir! It is inhuman
To trifle with a father's anguish thus.
Although this wretched man had forfeited
Both life and limb for such a slight offence,
Already he has suffer'd tenfold death.
Send him away uninjured to his home;
He'll know thee well in future; and this hour
He and his children's children will remember.
*Gessl.* Open a way there—quick! Why this delay?
Thy life is forfeited; I might despatch thee,
And see I graciously repose thy fate
Upon the skill of thine own practis'd hand.
No cause has he to say his doom is harsh
Who's made the master of his destiny.
Thou boastest of thy steady eye. 'Tis well!
Now is a fitting time to show thy skill.
The mark is worthy, and the prize is great.
To hit the bull's eye in the target—that
Can many another do as well as thou;
But he, methinks, is master of his craft
Who can at all times on his skill rely,
Nor lets his heart disturb or eye or hand.
*Fürst.* My lord, we bow to your authority;
But oh, let justice yield to mercy here.
Take half my property, nay, take it all,
But spare a father this unnatural doom!
*Walt.* Grandfather, do not kneel to that bad man!
Say, where am I to stand? I do not fear;
My father strikes the bird upon the wing,
And will not miss now when 'twould harm his boy!
*Stauff.* Does the child's innocence not touch your heart?
*Rössel.* Bethink you, sir, there is a God in heaven,
To whom you must account for all your deeds.
*Gessl.* [*pointing to the boy*]. Bind him to yonder lime-tree[1] straight!
*Walt.* Bind me?
No, I will not be bound! I will be still,
Still as a lamb—nor even draw my breath!
But if you bind me, I can not be still.
Then I shall writhe and struggle with my bonds.
*Har.* But let your eyes at least be bandaged, boy!
*Walt.* And why my eyes? No! Do you think I fear
An arrow from my father's hand? Not I!
I'll wait it firmly, nor so much as wink!
Quick, father, show them that thou art an archer!
He doubts thy skill—he thinks to ruin us.
Shoot, then, and hit, though but to spite the tyrant!
*He goes to the lime-tree, and an apple is placed on his head.*
*Melch.* [*to the country people*]. What! Is this outrage to be perpetrated
Before our very eyes? Where is our oath?
*Stauff.* 'Tis all in vain. We have no weapons here;
And see the wood of lances that surrounds us!
*Melch.* Oh! would to Heaven that we had struck at once!
God pardon those who counsell'd the delay!
*Gessl.* [*to* TELL]. Now, to thy task! Men bear not arms for nought.
'Tis dangerous to carry deadly weapons,

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[1] lime-tree: In 1576 the Tell fountain was erected on the site of this old linden tree; and in 1895, a bronze statue of Tell on the spot where he is supposed to have stood.

And on the archer oft his shaft recoils.
This right, these haughty peasant churls assume,
Trenches upon their master's privileges.
None should be armed but those who bear command.
It pleases you to wear the bow and bolt;—
Well,—be it so. I will provide the mark.

*Tell* [*bends the bow and fixes the arrow*]. A lane there! Room!

*Stauff.* What, Tell? You would—no, no!
You shake—your hand's unsteady—your knees tremble.

*Tell* [*letting the bow sink down*]. There's something swims before mine eyes!

*Women.* Great Heaven!

*Tell.* Release me from this shot! Here is my heart!
[*Tears open his breast.*]
Summon your troopers—let them strike me down!

*Gessl.* I do not want thy life, Tell, but the shot.
Thy talent's universal! Nothing daunts thee!
Thou canst direct the rudder like the bow!
Storms fright not thee, when there's a life at stake.
Now, saviour, help thyself,—thou savest all!

Tell *stands fearfully agitated by contending emotions, his hands moving convulsively, and his eyes turning alternately to the governor and heaven. Suddenly he takes a second arrow from his quiver and sticks it in his belt. The governor watches all these motions.*

*Walt.* [*beneath the lime-tree*]. Come, father, shoot! I'm not afraid!

*Tell* [*collects himself and levels the bow*]. It must be!

*Rud.* [*who all the while has been standing in a state of violent excitement, and has with difficulty restrained himself, advances*]. My lord, you will not urge this matter further.
You will not. It was surely but a test.
You've gained your object. Rigor push'd too far
Is sure to miss its aim, however good,
As snaps the bow that's all too straitly-bent.

*Gessl.* Peace, till your counsel's ask'd for!

*Rud.* I will speak!
Ay, and I dare. I reverence my king;
But acts like these must make his name abhorr'd.
He sanctions not this cruelty. I dare
Avouch the fact. And you outstep your powers
In handling thus an unoffending people.

*Gessl.* Ha! thou grow'st bold, methinks!

*Rud.* I have been dumb
To all the oppressions I was doom'd to see.
I've closed mine eyes, that they might not behold them,
Bade my rebellious, swelling heart be still,
And pent its struggles down within my breast.
But to be silent longer were to be
A traitor to my king and country both.

*Berth.* [*casting herself between him and the governor*]. Oh, Heaven! you but exasperate his rage!

*Rud.* My people I forsook—renounced my kindred—
Broke all the ties of nature, that I might
Attach myself to you. I madly thought
That I should best advance the general weal
By adding sinews to the Emperor's power.
The scales have fallen from mine eyes—I see
The fearful precipice on which I stand.
You've led my youthful judgment far astray,—
Deceived my honest heart. With best intent,
I had well nigh achiev'd my country's ruin.

*Gessl.* Audacious boy, this language to thy lord?

*Rud.* The Emperor is my lord, not you! I'm free
As you by birth, and I can cope with you
In every virtue that beseems a knight.
And if you stood not here in that King's name
Which I respect e'en where 'tis most abused,

I'd throw my gauntlet down, and you should give
An answer to my gage in knightly fashion.
Ay, beckon to your troopers! Here I stand;
But not like these [*pointing to the people*] —unarmed. I have a sword,
And he that stirs one step——
*Stauff.* [*exclaims*]. The apple's down!
*While the attention of the crowd has been directed to the spot where* Bertha *had cast herself between* Rudenz *and* Gessler, Tell *has shot.*
*Rössel.* The boy's alive!
*Many voices.* The apple has been struck!
Walter Fürst *staggers and is about to fall.* Bertha *supports him.*
*Gessl.* [*astonished*]. How? Has he shot? The madman!
*Berth.* Worthy father,
Pray you, compose yourself. The boy's alive.
*Walt.* [*runs in with the apple*]. Here is the apple, father! Well I knew
You would not harm your boy.
Tell *stands with his body bent forward, as though he would follow the arrow. His bow drops from his hand. When he sees the boy advancing he hastens to meet him with open arms, and embracing him passionately sinks down with him quite exhausted. All crowd round them, deeply affected.*
*Berth.* Oh, ye kind Heaven!
*Fürst.* [*to father and son*]. My children, my dear children!
*Stauff.* God be praised!
*Leuth.* Almighty powers! That was a shot indeed!
It will be talked of to the end of time.
*Har.* This feat of Tell, the archer, will be told
While yonder mountains stand upon their base.
*Hands the apple to* Gessler.
*Gessl.* By Heaven! the apple's cleft right through the core.
It was a master shot, I must allow.
*Rössel.* The shot was good. But woe to him who drove
The man to tempt his God by such a feat!
*Stauff.* Cheer up, Tell, rise! You've nobly freed yourself,
And now may go in quiet to your home.
*Rössel.* Come, to the mother let us bear her son!
[*They are about to lead him off*
*Gessl.* A word, Tell.
*Tell.* Sir, your pleasure?
*Gessl.* Thou didst place
A second arrow in thy belt—nay, nay!
I saw it well—what was thy purpose with it?
*Tell* [*confused*]. It is the custom with all archers, Sir.
*Gessl.* No, Tell, I cannot let that answer pass.
There was some other motive, well I know.
Frankly and cheerfully confess the truth;—
Whate'er it be, I promise thee thy life.
Wherefore the second arrow?
*Tell.* Well, my lord,
Since you have promised not to take my life,
I will, without reserve, declare the truth.
[*He draws the arrow from his belt and fixes his eyes sternly upon the governor.*]
If that my hand had struck my darling child,
This second arrow I had aimed at you,
And, be assured, I should not then have miss'd.
*Gessl.* Well, Tell, I promised thou shouldst have thy life;
I gave my knightly word, and I will keep it.
Yet, as I know the malice of thy thoughts,
I will remove thee hence to sure confinement,
Where neither sun nor moon shall reach thine eyes.
Thus from thy arrows I shall be secure.
Seize on him, guards, and bind him!
*They bind him.*
*Stauff.* How, my lord—
How can you treat in such a way a man
On whom God's hand has plainly been reveal'd?
*Gessl.* Well, let us see if it will save him twice!
Remove him to my ship; I'll follow straight.

In person I will see him lodged at Küssnacht.[1]
*Rössel.* You dare not do't. Nor durst the Emperor's self
So violate our dearest chartered rights.[2]
*Gessl.* Where are they? Has the Emp'ror confirm'd them?
He never has. And only by obedience
Need you expect to win that favor from him.
You are all rebels 'gainst the Emp'ror's power,
And bear a desperate and rebellious spirit.
I know you all—I see you through and through.
Him do I single from amongst you now,
But in his guilt you all participate.
The wise will study silence and obedience.
[*Exit, followed by* Bertha, Rudenz, Harras, *and attendants.* Friesshardt *and* Leuthold *remain*

*Fürst* [*in violent anguish*]. All's over now! He is resolved to bring
Destruction on myself and all my house.
*Stauff.* [*to* Tell]. Oh, why did you provoke the tyrant's rage?
*Tell.* Let him be calm who feels the pangs I felt.
*Stauff.* Alas! alas! Our every hope is gone.
With you we all are fettered and enchain'd.
*Country People* [*surrounding* Tell]. Our last remaining comfort goes with you!
*Leuth.* [*approaching him*]. I'm sorry for you, Tell, but must obey
*Tell.* Farewell!
*Walt.* [*clinging to him in great agony*]. Oh, father, father, my dear father!
*Tell* [*pointing to heaven*]. Thy father is on high—appeal to him!
*Stauff.* Hast thou no message, Tell, to send thy wife?
*Tell* [*clasping the boy passionately to his breast*]. The boy's uninjured; God will succor me!
[*Tears himself suddenly away and follows the soldiers of the guard*

## ACT IV

### Scene I

*Eastern shore of the Lake of Lucerne, rugged and singularly shaped rocks close the prospect to the west. The lake is agitated, violent roaring and rushing of wind with thunder and lightning at intervals.*

Kunz of Gersau, Fisherman *and* Boy

*Kunz.* I saw it with these eyes! Believe me, friend,
It happen'd all precisely as I've said.
*Fisherman.* Tell made a prisoner and borne off to Küssnacht?
The best man in the land, the bravest arm,
Had we resolved to strike for liberty!
*Kunz.* The Viceroy takes him up the lake in person:
They were about to go on board as I
Left Flüelen; but still the gathering storm,
That drove me here to land so suddenly,
Perchance has hindered their abrupt departure.
*Fisher.* Our Tell in chains, and in the Viceroy's power!
O, trust me, Gessler will entomb him, where
He nevermore shall see the light of day;
For, Tell once free, the tyrant well might dread
The just revenge of one so deep incensed.
*Kunz.* The old Landamman, too—von Attinghaus—
They say, is lying at the point of death.
*Fisher.* Then the last anchor of our hopes gives way!
He was the only man that dared to raise
His voice in favor of the people's rights.
*Kunz.* The storm grows worse and worse. So, fare ye well.
I'll go and seek out quarters in the village.
There's not a chance of getting off today. [*Exit*

*Fisher.* Tell dragg'd to prison, and the Baron dead!
Now, tyranny, exalt thy insolent front,—
Throw shame aside! The voice of truth is silenced,

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[1] **Küssnacht:** See note, Act I, Scene II, line 37 (page 483).

[2] **chartered rights:** one of these was that no Swiss could be imprisoned outside of his own canton. Tell is from Uri; Küssnacht is in Schwyz.

The eye that watch'd for us in darkness closed,
The arm that should have struck thee down, in chains!
*Boy.* 'Tis hailing hard—come, let us to the cottage!
This is no weather to be out in, father!
*Fisher.* Rage on, ye winds! Ye lightnings, flash your fires![1]
Burst, ye swollen clouds! Ye cataracts of heaven,
Descend, and drown the country! In the germ,
Destroy the generations yet unborn!
Ye savage elements, be lords of all!
Return, ye bears; ye ancient wolves, return
To this wide, howling waste! The land is yours.
Who would live here when liberty is gone!
*Boy.* Hark! How the wind whistles, and the whirlpool roars;
I never saw a storm so fierce as this!
*Fisher.* To level at the head of his own child!
Never had father such command before.
And shall not nature, rising in wild wrath,
Revolt against the deed? I should not marvel,
Though to the lake these rocks should bow their heads,
Though yonder pinnacles, yon towers of ice,
That, since creation's dawn, have known no thaw,
Should, from their lofty summits, melt away,—
Though yonder mountains, yon primeval cliffs,
Should topple down, and a new deluge whelm
Beneath its waves all living men's abodes!
*Bells heard.*
*Boy.* Hark, they are ringing on the mountain, yonder!
They surely see some vessel in distress,
And toll the bell that we may pray for it.
*Ascends a rock.*
*Fisher.* Woe to the bark that now pursues its course,
Rock'd in the cradle of these storm-toss'd waves!
Nor helm nor steersman here can aught avail;
The storm is master. Man is like a ball,
Toss'd 'twixt the winds and billows. Far or near,
No haven offers him its friendly shelter!
Without one ledge to grasp, the sheer smooth rocks
Look down inhospitably on his despair,
And only tender him their flinty breasts.
*Boy* [*calling from above*]. Father, a ship; and bearing down from Flüelen.
*Fisher.* Heaven pity the poor wretches! When the storm
Is once entangled in this strait of ours,
It rages like some savage beast of prey,
Struggling against its cage's iron bars!
Howling, it seeks an outlet—all in vain;
For the rocks hedge it round on every side,
Walling the narrow pass as high as heaven.
*He ascends a cliff.*
*Boy.* It is the Governor of Uri's ship;
By its red poop I know it, and the flag.
*Fisher.* Judgments of Heaven! Yes, it is he himself.
It is the governor! Yonder he sails,
And with him bears the burden of his crimes!
Soon has the arm of the avenger found him!
Now over him he knows a mightier lord.
These waves yield no obedience to his voice,
These rocks bow not their heads before his cap.
Boy, do not pray; stay not the Judge's arm!
*Boy.* I pray not for the governor—I pray
For Tell, who is on board the ship with him.
*Fisher.* Alas, ye blind, unreasoning elements!
Must ye, in punishing one guilty head,
Destroy the vessel and the pilot too?

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[1] Rage . . . fires: Compare *King Lear*, Act III, Scene II, lines 1-9.

*Boy.* See, see, they've clear'd the Buggisgrat;[1] but now
The blast, rebounding from the Devil's Minster,[1]
Has driven them back on the Great Axenberg.[2]
I cannot see them now.
*Fisher.* The Hakmesser[1]
Is there, that's founder'd many a gallant ship.
If they should fail to double that with skill,
Their bark will go to pieces on the rocks
That hide their jagged peaks below the lake.
They have on board the very best of pilots.
If any man can save them, Tell is he;
But he is manacled both hand and foot.

*Enter* William Tell, *with his cross-bow. He enters precipitately, looks wildly round, and testifies the most violent agitation. When he reaches the centre of the stage he throws himself upon his knees and stretches out his hands, first towards the earth, then towards heaven*

*Boy* [*observing him*]. See, father! Who is that man, kneeling yonder?
*Fisher.* He clutches at the earth with both his hands,
And looks as though he were beside himself.
*Boy* [*advancing*]. What do I see? Father, come here, and look!
*Fisher.* [*approaches*]. Who is it? God in Heaven! What! William Tell!
How came you hither? Speak, Tell!
*Boy.* Were you
In yonder ship, a prisoner, and in chains?
*Fisher.* Were they not bearing you away to Küssnacht?
*Tell* [*rising*]. I am released.
*Fisher.* and *Boy.* Released? Oh, miracle!
*Boy.* Whence came you here?
*Tell.* From yonder vessel!
*Fisher.* What?
*Boy.* Where is the Viceroy?
*Tell.* Drifting on the waves.
*Fisher.* Is't possible? But you! How are you here?
How 'scaped you from your fetters and the storm?
*Tell.* By God's most gracious providence. Attend.
*Fisher.* and *Boy.* Say on, say on!
*Tell.* You know what passed at Altdorf?
*Fisher.* I do—say on!
*Tell.* How I was seized and bound,
And order'd by the governor to Küssnacht.
*Fisher.* And how with you at Flüelen he embarked.
All this we know. Say how have you escaped?
*Tell.* I lay on deck, fast bound with cords, disarm'd,
In utter hopelessness. I did not think
Again to see the gladsome light of day,
Nor the dear faces of my wife and children,
And eyed disconsolate the waste of waters.—
*Fisher.* Oh, wretched man!
*Tell.* Then we put forth; the Viceroy,
Rudolph de Harras, and their suite. My bow
And quiver lay astern beside the helm;
And just as we had reached the corner, near
The Little Axen,[3] Heaven ordain'd it so,
That from the Gotthardt's gorge a hurricane
Swept down upon us with such headlong force
That ev'ry rower's heart within him sank,
And all on board look'd for a watery grave.
Then heard I one of the attendant train,
Turning to Gessler, in this strain accost him:
"You see our danger, and your own, my lord,
And that we hover on the verge of death.
The boatmen there are powerless from fear,

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[1] **Buggisgrat, Devil's Minster, Hakmesser:** Precipitous cliffs on the shore of the Lake of Lucerne.

[2] **Great Axenberg:** the mountain, 3353 feet high, on the east shore of Lake Lucerne. A road (*Axenstrasse*), runs high along the shore of the lake for seven miles, and frequently pierces the mountain through short tunnels.

[3] **Little Axen:** A rock on the shore of the Lake of Lucerne.

Nor are they confident what course to take;—
Now, here is Tell, a stout and fearless man,
And knows to steer with more than common skill.
How if we should avail ourselves of him
In this emergency?" The Viceroy then
Address'd me thus: "If thou wilt undertake
To bring us through this tempest safely, Tell,
I might consent to free thee from thy bonds."
I answer'd, "Yes, my lord, with God's assistance,
I'll see what can be done, and help us Heaven!"
On this they loosed me from my bonds, and I
Stood by the helm and fairly steered along,
Yet ever eyed my shooting-gear askance,
And kept a watchful eye upon the shore,
To find some point where I might leap to land;
And when I had descried a shelving crag,[1]
That jutted, smooth atop, into the lake—

*Fisher.* I know it. 'Tis at foot of the Great Axen;
But looks so steep, I never could have dreamt
'Twere possible to leap it from the boat.

*Tell.* I bade the men put forth their utmost might,
Until we came before the shelving crag.
For there, I said, the danger will be past!
Stoutly they pull'd, and soon we near'd the point.
One prayer to God for his assisting grace,
And straining every muscle, I brought round
The vessel's stern close to the rocky wall;
Then snatching up my weapons, with a bound
I swung myself upon the flattened shelf,
And with my feet thrust off, with all my might,
The puny bark into the hell of waters.
There let it drift about, as Heaven ordains!
Thus am I here, deliver'd from the might
Of the dread storm, and man, more dreadful still.

*Fisher.* Tell, Tell, the Lord has manifestly wrought
A miracle in thy behalf! I scarce
Can credit my own eyes. But tell me, now,
Whither you purpose to betake yourself?
For you will be in peril, should the Viceroy
Chance to escape this tempest with his life.

*Tell.* I heard him say, as I lay bound on board,
His purpose was to disembark at Brunnen,
And, crossing Schwyz, convey me to his castle.

*Fisher.* Means he to go by land?

*Tell.* So he intends.

*Fisher.* Oh, then, conceal yourself without delay!
Not twice will heaven release you from his grasp.

*Tell.* Which is the nearest way to Arth and Küssnacht?

*Fisher.* The public road leads by the way of Steinen,
But there's a nearer road, and more retired,
That goes by Lowerz, which my boy can show you.

*Tell* [*gives him his hand*]. May Heaven reward your kindness! Fare ye well.

[*As he is going, he comes back*

Did not you also take the oath at Rootli?
I heard your name, methinks.

*Fisher.* Yes, I was there,
And took the oath of the confederacy.

*Tell.* Then do me this one favor: speed to Bürglen—
My wife is anxious at my absence—tell her
That I am free and in secure concealment.

*Fisher.* But whither shall I tell her you have fled?

*Tell.* You'll find her father with her, and some more,
Who took the oath with you upon the Rootli;

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[1] shelving crag: the so-called *Tell's platte* (ledge). On it now stands a chapel built in 1388 to commemorate this feat of Tell. Its walls are decorated with scenes from the Tell legend.

Bid them be resolute, and strong of heart,—
For Tell is free and master of his arm;
They shall hear further news of me ere long.
*Fisher.* What have you, then, in view? Come, tell me frankly!
*Tell.* When once 'tis *done*, 'twill be in every mouth. [*Exit*
*Fisher.* Show him the way, boy. Heaven be his support!
Whate'er he has resolved, he'll execute. [*Exit*

### Scene II

*Baronial mansion of Attinghausen. The* Baron *upon a couch dying.* Walter Fürst, Stauffacher, Melchthal, *and* Baumgarten *attending round him.* Walter Tell *kneeling before the dying man.*

*Fürst.* All now is over with him. He is gone.
*Stauff.* He lies not like one dead. The feather, see,
Moves on his lips! His sleep is very calm,
And on his features plays a placid smile.

Baumgarten *goes to the door and speaks with some one.*

*Fürst.* Who's there?
*Baum.* [*returning*]. Tell's wife, your daughter; she insists
That she must speak with you, and see her boy.

Walter Tell *rises.*

*Fürst.* I who need comfort—can I comfort her?
Does every sorrow centre on my head?
*Hedw.* [*forcing her way in*]. Where is my child? Unhand me! I must see him.
*Stauff.* Be calm! Reflect you're in the house of death!
*Hedw.* [*falling upon her boy's neck*]. My Walter! Oh, he yet is mine!
*Walt.* Dear mother!
*Hedw.* And is it surely so! Art thou unhurt?
[*Gazing at him with anxious tenderness.*]
And is it possible he aim'd at thee?
How could he do it? Oh, he has no heart—
And he could wing an arrow at his child!
*Fürst.* His soul was rack'd with anguish when he did it.
No choice was left him, but to shoot or die!
*Hedw.* Oh, if he had a father's heart, he would
Have sooner perish'd by a thousand deaths!
*Stauff.* You should be grateful for God's gracious care,
That ordered things so well.
*Hedw.* Can I forget
What might have been the issue? God of Heaven!
Were I to live for centuries, I still
Should see my boy tied up,—his father's mark,—
And still the shaft would quiver in my heart!
*Melch.* You know not how the Viceroy taunted him!
*Hedw.* Oh ruthless heart of man! Offend his pride,
And reason in his breast forsakes her seat;
In his blind wrath he'll stake upon a cast
A child's existence, and a mother's heart!
*Baum.* Is then your husband's fate not hard enough,
That you embitter it by such reproaches?
Have you no feeling for his sufferings?
*Hedw.* [*turning to him and gazing full upon him*]. Hast thou tears only for thy friend's distress?
Say, where were you when he—my noble Tell,
Was bound in chains? Where was your friendship then?
The shameful wrong was done before your eyes;
Patient you stood, and let your friend be dragg'd,
Ay, from your very hands. Did ever Tell
Act thus to you? Did he stand whining by
When on your heels the Viceroy's horsemen press'd,
And full before you roared the storm-toss'd lake?
Oh, not with idle tears he show'd his pity;
Into the boat he sprung, forgot his home,
His wife, his children, and delivered thee!
*Fürst.* It had been madness to attempt his rescue,

Unarm'd, and few in numbers as we were.
*Hedw.* [*casting herself upon his bosom*]. Oh, father, and thou, too, hast lost my Tell!
The country—all have lost him! All lament
His loss; and, oh, how he must pine for us!
Heaven keep his soul from sinking to despair!
No friend's consoling voice can penetrate
His dreary dungeon walls. Should he fall sick!
Ah! In the vapors of the murky vault
He must fall sick. Even as the Alpine rose
Grows pale and withers in the swampy air,
There is no life for him but in the sun,
And in the balm of heaven's refreshing breeze.
Imprison'd! Liberty to him is breath;
He cannot live in the rank dungeon air!
*Stauff.* Pray you be calm! And hand in hand we'll all
Combine to burst his prison doors.
*Hedw.* Without him,
What have you power to do? While Tell was free,
There still, indeed, was hope—weak innocence
Had still a friend, and the oppress'd a stay.
Tell saved you all! You cannot all combined
Release him from his cruel prison bonds.
*The* Baron *wakes.*
*Baum.* Hush, hush! He starts!
*Atting.* [*sitting up*]. Where is he?
*Stauff.* Who?
*Atting.* He leaves me,—
In my last moments he abandons me.
*Stauff.* He means his nephew. Have they sent for him?
*Fürst.* He has been summoned. Cheerly, sir! Take comfort!
He has found his heart at last, and is our own.
*Atting.* Say, has he spoken for his native land?
*Stauff.* Ay, like a hero!
*Atting.* Wherefore comes he not,
That he may take my blessing ere I die?
I feel my life fast ebbing to a close.
*Stauff.* Nay, talk not thus, dear sir! This last short sleep
Has much refresh'd you, and your eye is bright.
*Atting.* Life is but pain, and even that has left me;
My sufferings, like my hopes, have passed away.
[*Observing the boy.*]
What boy is that?
*Fürst.* Bless him. Oh, good, my lord!
He is my grandson, and is fatherless.
Hedwig *kneels with the boy before the dying man.*
*Atting.* And fatherless—I leave you all, ay all!
Oh, wretched fate, that these old eyes should see
My country's ruin as they close in death!
Must I attain the utmost verge of life
To feel my hopes go with me to the grave?
*Stauff.* [*to* Fürst]. Shall he depart 'mid grief and gloom like this?
Shall not his parting moments be illumed
By hope's delightful beams? My noble lord,
Raise up your drooping spirit! We are not
Forsaken quite—past all deliverance.
*Atting.* Who shall deliver you?
*Fürst.* Ourselves. For know
The Cantons three are to each other pledged
To hunt the tyrants from the land. The league
Has been concluded, and a sacred oath
Confirms our union. Ere another year
Begins its circling course—the blow shall fall.
In a free land your ashes shall repose.
*Atting.* The league concluded! Is it really so?
*Melch.* On one day shall the Cantons rise together.
All is prepared to strike—and to this hour
The secret closely kept, though hundreds share it.

The ground is hollow 'neath the tyrants' feet;
Their days of rule are numbered, and ere long
No trace of their dominion shall remain.
*Atting.* Ay, but their castles, how to master them?
*Melch.* On the same day they, too, are doom'd to fall.
*Atting.* And are the nobles parties to this league?
*Stauff.* We trust to their assistance should we need it;
As yet the peasantry alone have sworn.
*Atting.* [*raising himself up, in great astonishment*]. And have the peasantry dared such a deed
On their own charge, without the nobles' aid—
Relied so much on their own proper strength?
Nay then, indeed, they want our help no more;
We may go down to death cheer'd by the thought
That after us the majesty of man
Will live, and be maintain'd by other hands.
[*He lays his hand upon the head of the child, who is kneeling before him.*]
From this boy's head, whereon the apple lay,
Your new and better liberty shall spring;
The old is crumbling down—the times are changing—
And from the ruins blooms a fairer life.
*Stauff.* [*to* Fürst]. See, see, what splendor streams around his eye!
This is not Nature's last expiring flame,
It is the beam of renovated life.
*Atting.* From their old towers the nobles are descending,
And swearing in the towns the civic oath.
In Uechtland[1] and Thurgau[1] the work's begun;
The noble Bern[2] lifts her commanding head,
And Freyburg[2] is a stronghold of the free;
The stirring Zürich[2] calls her guilds to arms;—
And now, behold!—the ancient might of kings
Is shiver'd 'gainst her everlasting walls.
[*He speaks what follows with a prophetic tone; his utterance rising into enthusiasm.*]
I see the princes and their haughty peers,
Clad all in steel, come striding on to crush
A harmless shepherd race with mailèd hand.
Desp'rate the conflict: 'tis for life or death;
And many a pass will tell to after years
Of glorious victories sealed in foeman's blood.[3]
The peasant throws himself with naked breast,
A willing victim on their serried lances.
They yield—the flower of chivalry's cut down,
And freedom waves her conquering banner high!
[*Grasps the hands of* Walter Fürst *and* Stauffacher.]
Hold fast together, then,—for ever fast!
Let freedom's haunts be one in heart and mind!
Set watches on your mountain tops, that league
May answer league, when comes the hour to strike.
Be one—be one—be one——
[*He falls back upon the cushion. His lifeless hands continue to grasp those of* Fürst *and* Stauffacher, *who regard him for some moments in silence, and then retire, overcome with sorrow. Meanwhile the servants have quietly pressed into the chamber, testifying different degrees of grief. Some kneel down beside him and weep on his body: while this scene is passing, the castle bell tolls.*]

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[1] **Uechtland, Thurgau:** ancient cantons of Switzerland.

[2] **Bern, Freyburg, Zürich:** chief cities in the ancient cantons in line 128 above.

[3] **glorious . . . blood:** An allusion to the gallant self-devotion of Arnold Struthan of Winkelried, at the battle of Sempach (9th July, 1386), who broke the Austrian phalanx by rushing on their lances, grasping as many of them as he could reach, and concentrating them upon his breast. The confederates rushed forward through the gap thus opened by the sacrifice of their comrade, broke and cut down their enemy's ranks, and soon became the masters of the field. "Dear and faithful confederates, I will open you a passage. Protect my wife and children," were the words of Winkelried, as he rushed to death. This story is probably legendary.

Rudenz *enters hurriedly.*

*Rud.* Lives he? Oh say, can he still hear my voice?
*Fürst.* [*averting his face*]. You are our seignior and protector now;
Henceforth this castle bears another name.
*Rud.* [*gazing at the body with deep emotion*]. Oh, God! Is my repentance, then, too late?
Could he not live some few brief moments more,
To see the change that has come o'er my heart?
Oh, I was deaf to his true counselling voice
While yet he walked on earth. Now he is gone,
Gone, and for ever,—leaving me the debt—
The heavy debt I owe him—undischarged!
Oh, tell me! did he part in anger with me?
*Stauff.* When dying, he was told what you had done,
And bless'd the valor that inspired your words!
*Rud.* [*kneeling down beside the dead body*]. Yes, sacred relics of a man beloved
Thou lifeless corpse! Here, on thy death-cold hand,
Do I abjure all foreign ties for ever!
And to my country's cause devote myself.
I am a Switzer, and will act as one,
With my whole heart and soul.
[*Rises.*] Mourn for our friend,
Our common parent, yet be not dismay'd!
'Tis not alone his lands that I inherit,—
His heart—his spirit, have devolved on me;
And my young arm shall execute the task,
For which his hoary age remain'd your debtor.
Give me your hands, ye venerable fathers!
Thine, Melchthal, too! Nay, do not hesitate,
Nor from me turn distrustfully away.
Accept my plighted vow—my knightly oath!
*Fürst.* Give him your hands, my friends! A heart like his,
That sees and owns its error, claims our trust.
*Melch.* You ever held the peasantry in scorn.
What surety have we that you mean us fair?
*Rud.* Oh, think not of the error of my youth!
*Stauff.* [*to* Melchthal]. Be one! They were our father's latest words.
See they be not forgotten!
*Melch.* Take my hand—
A peasant's hand,—and with it, noble sir,
The gage and the assurance of a man!
Without us, sir, what would the nobles be?
Our order is more ancient, too, than yours!
*Rud.* I honor it, and with my sword will shield it!
*Melch.* The arm, my lord, that tames the stubborn earth,
And makes its bosom blossom with increase,
Can also shield a man's defenseless breast.
*Rud.* Then you shall shield my breast, and I will yours;
Thus each be strengthen'd by the other's aid!
Yet wherefore talk we, while our native land
Is still to alien tyranny a prey!
First let us sweep the foeman from the soil,
Then reconcile our difference in peace!
[*After a moment's pause.*]
How! You are silent! Not a word for me?
And have I yet no title to your trust?—
Then must I force my way, despite your will,
Into the League you secretly have form'd.
You've held a Diet on the Rootli,—I
Know this,—know all that was transacted there!
And though I was not trusted with your secret,
I still have kept it like a sacred pledge.
Trust me, I never was my country's foe,

Nor would I e'er have ranged myself against you!
Yet you did wrong—to put your rising off.
Time presses! We must strike, and swiftly too!
Already Tell has fallen a sacrifice
To your delay.
*Stauff.* We swore to wait till Christmas.
*Rud.* I was not there,—I did not take the oath.
If you delay, I will not!
*Melch.* What! You would——
*Rud.* I count me now among the country's fathers,
And to protect you is my foremost duty.
*Fürst.* Within the earth to lay these dear remains,
That is your nearest and most sacred duty.
*Rud.* When we have set the country free, we'll place
Our fresh victorious wreaths upon his bier.
Oh, my dear friends, 'tis not your cause alone!—
I have a cause to battle with the tyrants
That more concerns myself. Know that my Bertha
Has disappear'd,—been carried off by stealth,—
Stolen from amongst us by their ruffian hands!
*Stauff.* And has the tyrant dared so fell an outrage
Against a lady free and nobly born?
*Rud.* ~~Alas! my~~ friends, I promised help to you,
And I must first implore it for myself!
She that I love is stolen—is forced away,
And who knows where the tyrant has conceal'd her,
Or with what outrages his ruffian crew
May force her into nuptials she detests?
Forsake me not!—Oh, help me to her rescue.
She loves you! Well, oh well, has she deserved,
That all should rush to arms in her behalf!
*Stauff.* What course do you propose?
~~*Rud.*~~ Alas! I know not.
In the dark mystery that shrouds her fate,—
In the dread agony of this suspense,—
Where I can grasp at nought of certainty,—
One single ray of comfort beams upon me.
From out the ruins of the tyrant's power
Alone can she be rescued from the grave.
Their strongholds must be levell'd! every one
Ere we can pierce into her gloomy prison.
*Melch.* Come, lead us on! We follow! Why defer
Until to-morrow what to-day may do?
Tell's arm was free when we at Rootli swore,
This foul enormity was yet undone.
And change of circumstance brings change of law;
Who such a coward as to waver still?
*Rud.* [*to* WALTER FÜRST]. Meanwhile to arms, and wait in readiness
The fiery signal on the mountain tops.
For swifter than a boat can scour the lake
Shall you have tidings of our victory;
And when you see the welcome flames ascend,
Then, like the lightning, swoop upon the foe,
And lay the despots and their creatures low.

### SCENE III

*The pass near Küssnacht,*[1] *sloping down from behind, with rocks on either side. The travellers are visible upon the heights before they appear on the stage. Rocks all around the stage. Upon one of the foremost a projecting cliff overgrown with brushwood.*

*Tell* [*enters with his cross-bow*].
Here thro' this deep defile he needs must pass;
There leads no other road to Küssnacht:—here
I'll do it:—the opportunity is good.
Yon alder tree stands well for my concealment.
Thence my avenging shaft will surely reach him;

---

[1] **The pass near Küssnacht:** Today this pass has been filled in, and a road runs through it. A chapel, decorated with frescoes of scenes from the Tell legend, stands on the spot where Gessler fell.

The straitness of the path forbids pursuit.
Now, Gessler, balance thine account with Heaven!
Thou must away from earth,—thy sand is run.

I led a peaceful, inoffensive life;—
My bow was bent on forest game alone,
And my pure soul was free from thoughts of murder—
But thou hast scared me from my dream of peace;
The milk of human kindness thou hast turn'd
To rankling poison in my breast; and made
Appalling deeds familiar to my soul.
He who could make his own child's head his mark
Can speed his arrow to his foeman's heart.

My children dear, my lov'd and faithful wife
Must be protected, tyrant, from thy fury!—
When last I drew my bow—with trembling hand—
And thou, with murderous joy, a father forced
To level at his child—when, all in vain,
Writhing before thee, I implored thy mercy—
Then in the agony of my soul I vow'd
A fearful oath, which met God's ear alone,
That when my bow next wing'd an arrow's flight
Its aim should be thy heart. The vow I made,
Amid the hellish torments of that moment,
I hold a sacred debt, and I will pay it.

Thou art my lord, my Emperor's delegate;
Yet would the Emperor not have stretch'd his power
So far as thou. He sent thee to these Cantons
To deal forth law—stern law—for he is anger'd;
But not to wanton with unbridled will
In every cruelty, with fiend-like joy:—
There is a God to punish and avenge.

Come forth, thou bringer once of bitter pangs,
My precious jewel now,—my chiefest treasure—
A mark I'll set thee, which the cry of grief
Could never penetrate,—but thou shalt pierce it.—
And thou, my trusty bowstring, that so oft
Has served me faithfully in sportive scenes,
Desert me not in this most serious hour—
Only be true this once, my own good cord,
That hast so often wing'd the biting shaft:—
For shouldst thou fly successless from my hand,
I have no second to send after thee.
[*Travellers pass over the stage.*]

I'll sit me down upon this bench of stone,
Hewn for the wayworn traveller's brief repose—
For here there is no home.—Each hurries by
The other, with quick step and careless look,
Nor stays to question of his grief.—Here goes
The merchant, full of care,—the pilgrim, next,
With slender scrip,—and then the pious monk.
The scowling robber, the jovial player,
The carrier with his heavy-laden horse,
That comes to us from the far haunts of men;
For every road conducts to the world's end.
They all push onwards—every man intent
On his own several business—mine is murder.
[*Sits down.*]

Time was, my dearest children, when with joy
You hail'd your father's safe return to home

From his long mountain toils; for, when he came,
He ever brought some little present with him.
A lovely Alpine flower—a curious bird—
Or elf-boat,[1] found by wanderer on the hills.—
But now he goes in quest of other game:
In the wild pass he sits, and broods on murder,
And watches for the life-blood of his foe.—
But still his thoughts are fixed on you alone,
Dear children.—'Tis to guard your innocence,
To shield you from the tyrant's fell revenge,
He bends his bow to do a deed of blood!
[*Rises.*]

Well—I am watching for a noble prey—
Does not the huntsman, with severest toil,
Roam for whole days, amid the winter's cold,
Leap with a daring bound from rock to rock,
And climb the jagged, slippery steeps, to which
His limbs are glued by his own streaming blood[2]—
And all this but to gain a wretched chamois.
A far more precious prize is now my aim—
The heart of that dire foe who would destroy me.
[*Sprightly music heard in the distance, which comes gradually nearer.*]
From my first years of boyhood I have used
The bow—been practised in the archer's feats;
The bull's eye many a time my shafts have hit,
And many a goodly prize have I brought home,
Won in the games of skill.—This day I'll make
My master-shot, and win the highest prize
Within the whole circumference of the mountains.

*A marriage train passes over the stage and goes up the pass.* TELL *gazes at it, leaning on his bow. He is joined by* STÜSSI *the Ranger.*

*Stüssi.* There goes the bridal party of the steward
Of Mörlischachen's cloister. He is rich!
And has some ten good pastures on the Alps.
He goes to fetch his bride from Imisee,[3]
There will be revelry to-night at Küssnacht.
Come with us—ev'ry honest man's invited.

*Tell.* A gloomy guest fits not a wedding feast.

*Stüssi.* If grief oppress you, dash it from your heart!
Bear with your lot. The times are heavy now,
And we must snatch at pleasure while we can.
Here 'tis a bridal, there a burial.

*Tell.* And oft the one treads close upon the other.

*Stüssi.* So runs the world at present. Everywhere
We meet with woe and misery enough.
There's been a slide of earth in Glarus,[4] and
A whole side of the Glärnisch[4] has fallen in.

*Tell.* Strange! And do even the hills begin to totter?
There is stability for naught on earth.

*Stüssi.* Strange tidings, too, we hear from other parts.
I spoke with one but now, that came from Baden,[5]
Who said a knight was on his way to court,
And, as he rode along, a swarm of wasps
Surrounded him, and settling on his horse,

---

[1] **elf-boat:** *ammonite,* a fossil shell.

[2] **glued . . . blood:** Schiller had read this fable that chamois hunters cut the soles of their feet in order that the congealing blood might prevent slipping on the rocks.

[3] **Imisee:** usually *Immensee,* a village half a mile away from Küssnacht.

[4] **Glarus, Glärnisch:** a canton and mountain respectively.

[5] **Baden:** a small town near Zürich where the Duke of Austria had a castle.

So fiercely stung the beast that it fell dead,
And he proceeded to the court on foot.
*Tell.* Even the weak are furnish'd with a sting.

ARMGART *enters with several children, and places herself at the entrance of the pass*

*Stüssi.* 'Tis thought to bode disaster to the country,—
Some horrid deed against the course of nature.
*Tell.* Why, every day brings forth such fearful deeds;
There needs no miracle to tell their coming.
*Stüssi.* Too true! He's bless'd, who tills his field in peace,
And sits untroubled by his own fireside.
*Tell.* The very meekest cannot rest in quiet,
Unless it suits with his ill neighbor's humor.
TELL *looks frequently with restless expectation towards the top of the pass.*
*Stüssi.* So fare you well! You're waiting some one here?
*Tell.* I am.
*Stüssi.* A pleasant meeting with your friends!
You are from Uri, are you not? His grace
The governor's expected thence to-day.
*Traveller* [*entering*]. Look not to see the governor to-day.
The streams are flooded by the heavy rains,
And all the bridges have been swept away.
TELL *rises.*
*Armgart* [*coming forward*]. The Viceroy not arriv'd?
*Stüssi.* And do you seek him?
*Arm.* Alas, I do!
*Stüssi.* But why thus place yourself
Where you obstruct his passage down the pass?
*Arm.* Here he cannot escape me. He *must* hear me.
*Friess.* [*coming hastily down the pass and calls upon the stage*]. Make way, make way! My lord the governor,
Is coming down on horseback close behind me. [*Exit* TELL

*Arm.* [*with animation*]. The Viceroy comes!
*She goes towards the pass with her children.* GESSLER *and* RUDOLPH DER HARRAS *appear upon the heights on horseback.*
*Stüssi* [*to* FRIESSHARDT]. How got ye through the stream,
When all the bridges have been carried down?
*Friess.* We've battled with the billows; and, my friend,
An Alpine torrent's nothing after that.
*Stüssi.* How! Were you out, then, in that dreadful storm?
*Friess.* Ay, that we were! I shall not soon forget it.
*Stüssi.* Stay, speak—
*Friess.* I cannot. I must to the castle,
And tell them that the governor's at hand. [*Exit*
*Stüssi.* If honest men, now, had been in the ship,
It had gone down with every soul on board:—
Some folks are proof 'gainst fire and water both.
[*Looking round.*]
Where has the huntsman gone, with whom I spoke? [*Exit*

*Enter* GESSLER *and* RUDOLPH DER HARRAS *on horseback*

*Gessl.* Say what you please; I am the Emperor's servant,
And my first care must be to do his pleasure.
He did not send me here to fawn and cringe
And coax these boors into good humor. No!
Obedience he must have. We soon shall see
If king or peasant is to lord it here.
*Arm.* Now is the moment! Now for my petition!
*Gessl.* 'Twas not in sport that I set up the cap
In Altdorf—or to try the people's hearts—
All this I knew before. I set it up
That they might learn to bend those stubborn necks
They carry far too proudly—and I placed
What well I knew their eyes could never brook

Full in the road, which they perforce must pass,
That, when their eye fell on it, they might call
That lord to mind whom they too much forget.
*Har.* But surely, sir, the people have some rights—
*Gessl.* This is no time to settle what they are.
Great projects are at work, and hatching now.
The Imperial house seeks to extend its power.
Those vast designs of conquest, which the sire[1]
Has gloriously begun, the son[1] will end.
This petty nation is a stumbling-block—
One way or other, it must be subjected.
*They are about to pass on.* ARMGART *throws herself down before* GESSLER.
*Arm.* Mercy, lord governor! Oh, pardon, pardon!
*Gessl.* Why do you cross me on the public road?
Stand back, I say.
*Arm.* My husband lies in prison;
My wretched orphans cry for bread. Have pity,
Pity, my lord, upon our sore distress!
*Har.* Who are you, woman; and who is your husband?
*Arm.* A poor wild-hay-man of the Rigiberg,[2]
Kind sir, who on the brow of the abyss
Mows down the grass from steep and craggy shelves
To which the very cattle dare not climb.
*Har.* [*to* GESSLER]. By Heaven! a sad and miserable life!
I prithee, give the wretched man his freedom.
How great soever his offence may be,
His horrid trade is punishment enough.
[*To* ARMGART.] You shall have justice. To the castle bring
Your suit. This is no place to deal with it.
*Arm.* No, no, I will not stir from where I stand
Until your grace restore my husband to me.
Six months already has he been in prison,
And waits the sentence of a judge in vain.
*Gessl.* How! would you force me, woman? Hence! Begone!
*Arm.* Justice, my lord! Ay, justice! Thou art judge:
The deputy of the Emperor—of Heaven.
Then do thy duty,—as thou hopest for justice
From Him who rules above, show it to us!
*Gessl.* Hence, drive this daring rabble from my sight!
Bold
*Arm.* [*seizing his horse's reins*]. No, no, by Heaven, I've nothing more to lose.—
Thou stirr'st not, Viceroy, from this spot, until
Thou dost me fullest justice. Knit thy brows,
And roll thy eyes—I fear not. Our distress
Is so extreme, so boundless, that we care
No longer for thine anger.
*Gessl.* Woman, hence!
Give way, I say, or I will ride thee down.
*Arm.* Well, do so—there—
[*Throws her children and herself upon the ground before him.*]
Here on the ground I lie,
I and my children. Let the wretched orphans
Be trodden by thy horse into the dust!
It will not be the worst that thou hast done.
*Har.* Are you mad, woman?
*Arm.* [*continuing with vehemence*]. Many a day thou hast
Trampled the Emperor's lands beneath thy feet.
Oh, I am but a woman! Were I a man,
I'd find some better thing to do than here
Lie grovelling in the dust.
*The music of the wedding party is again heard from the top of the pass, but more softly.*
*Gessl.* Where are my knaves?
Drag her away, lest I forget myself,
And do some deed I may repent hereafter.
*Har.* My lord, the servants cannot force a passage;
The pass is block'd up by a marriage party.

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[1] **the sire:** the former Emperor Rudolf of Habsburg; **the son:** the present Emperor Albrecht.

[2] **Rigiberg:** The Rigi is the great mountain on the north shore of Lake Lucerne.

*Gessl.* Too mild a ruler am I to this people,
Their tongues are all too bold—nor have they yet
Been tamed to due submission, as they shall be.
I must take order for the remedy;
I will subdue this stubborn mood of theirs,
And crush the Soul of Liberty within them.
I'll publish a new law throughout the land;
I will—

[*An arrow pierces him,—he puts his hand on his heart, and is about to sink—with a feeble voice.*]

Oh God, have mercy on my soul!

*Har.* My lord! my lord! Oh God! What's this! Whence came it?

*Arm.* [*starts up*]. Dead, dead! he reels, he falls! 'Tis in his heart!

*Har.* [*springs from his horse*]. This is most horrible! Oh, Heaven! sir knight,
Address yourself to God and pray for mercy,—
You are a dying man.

*Gessl.* That shot was Tell's.

*He slides from his horse into the arms of* Rudolph der Harras, *who lays him down upon the bench.* Tell *appears above upon the rocks.*

*Tell.* Thou know'st the archer, seek no other hand.
Our cottages are free, and innocence
Secure from thee: thou'lt be our curse no more.

[Tell *disappears. People rush in*

*Stüssi.* What is the matter? Tell me what has happen'd?

*Arm.* The governor is shot—kill'd by an arrow!

*People* [*running in*]. Who has been shot?

*While the foremost of the marriage party are coming on the stage the hindmost are still upon the heights. The music continues.*

*Har.* He's bleeding fast to death.
Away for help—pursue the murderer!
Unhappy man, is't thus that thou must die?
Thou wouldst not heed the warnings that I gave thee!

*Stüssi.* By Heaven, his cheek is pale! His life ebbs fast.

*Many voices.* Who did the deed?

*Har.* What! Are the people mad,
That they make music to a murder? Silence!

[*Music breaks off suddenly. People continue to flock in.*]

Speak, if thou canst, my lord. Hast thou no charge
To intrust me with?

[Gessler *makes signs with his hand, which he repeats with vehemence when he finds they are not understood.*]

What would you have me do?
Shall I to Küssnacht? I can't guess your meaning.
Do not give way to this impatience. Leave
All thoughts of earth, and make your peace with Heaven.

*The whole marriage party gather round the dying man.*

*Stüssi.* See there! how pale he grows! Death's gathering now
About his heart;—his eyes grow dim and glazed.

*Arm.* [*holds up a child*]. Look, children, how a tyrant dies!

*Har.* Mad hag!
Have you no touch of feeling, that you look
On horrors such as these without a shudder?
Help me—take hold. What! will not one assist
To pull the torturing arrow from his breast?

*Women.* We touch the man whom God's own hand has struck!

*Har.* All curses light on you!

*Draws his sword.*

*Stüssi* [*seizes his arm*]. Gently, sir knight!
Your power is at an end. 'Twere best forbear
Our country's foe is fallen. We will brook
No further violence. We are free men.

*All.* The country's free!

*Har.* And is it come to this?
Fear and obedience at an end so soon?

[*To the soldiers of the guard, who are thronging in.*]
You see, my friends, the bloody piece of work
They've acted here. 'Tis now too late for help,
And to pursue the murderer were vain.
New duties claim our care. Set on to Küssnacht,
And let us save that fortress for the king!
For in an hour like this all ties of order,
Fealty and faith are scatter'd to the winds.
No man's fidelity is to be trusted.

*As he is going out with the soldiers, six* Fratres Misericordiæ *appear*

*Arm.* Here come the brotherhood of mercy. Room!
*Stüssi.* The victim's slain, and now the ravens stoop.
*Brothers of Mercy* [*form a semicircle round the body, and sing in solemn tones*]. With hasty step death presses on,
Nor grants to man a moment's stay;
He falls ere half his race be run,
In manhood's pride is swept away:
Prepar'd, or unprepar'd, to die,
He stands before his Judge on high.
[*While they are repeating the last two lines, the curtain falls.*]

## ACT V

### Scene I

*A common near Altdorf. In the background to the right the Keep of Uri, with the scaffold still standing, as in the Third Scene of the First Act. To the left, the view opens upon numerous mountains, on all of which signal fires are burning. Day is breaking, and bells are heard ringing from various distances.*

Ruodi, Kuoni, Werni, Master Mason *and many other country people, also women and children*

*Ruodi.* Look at the fiery signals on the mountains!
*Mason.* Hark to the bells above the forest there!
*Ruodi.* The enemy's expelled.
*Mason.* The forts are taken.
*Ruodi.* And we of Uri, do we still endure
Upon our native soil the tyrant's Keep?
Are we the last to strike for liberty?
*Mason.* Shall the yoke stand, that was to bow our necks?
Up! Tear it to the ground!
*All.* Down, down with it!
*Ruodi.* Where is the Stier of Uri?[1]
*Uri.* Here. What would ye?
*Ruodi.* Up to your tower, and wind us such a blast
As shall resound afar, from hill to hill,
Rousing the echoes of each peak and glen,
And call the mountain men in haste together!
[*Exit* Stier of Uri

*Enter* Walter Fürst

*Fürst.* Stay, stay, my friends! As yet we have not learn'd
What has been done in Unterwald and Schwyz.
Let's wait till we receive intelligence!
*Ruodi.* Wait, wait for what? The accursed tyrant's dead,
And the bright day of liberty has dawn'd!
*Mason.* How! Do these flaming signals not suffice,
That blaze on every mountain top around?
*Ruodi.* Come all, fall to—come, men and women, all!
Destroy the scaffold! Tear the arches down!
Down with the walls, let not a stone remain!
*Mason.* Come, comrades, come! We built it, and we know
How best to hurl it down.
*All.* Come! Down with it!
*They fall upon the building at every side.*
*Fürst.* The floodgates burst. They're not to be restrained.

*Enter* Melchthal *and* Baumgarten

*Melch.* What! Stands the fortress still, when Sarnen lies
In ashes, and when Rossberg is a ruin?
*Fürst.* You, Melchthal, here? D'ye bring us liberty?

---

[1] Stier of Uri: hornblower of Uri.

Say, have you freed the country of the foe?
*Melch.* We've swept them from the soil. Rejoice, my friend;
Now, at this very moment, while we speak,
There's not a tyrant left in Switzerland!
*Fürst.* How did you get the forts into your power?
*Melch.* Rudenz it was who, with a gallant arm
And manly daring, took the keep at Sarnen.
The Rossberg I had stormed the night before.
But hear what chanced. Scarce had we driven the foe
Forth from the keep, and given it to the flames,
That now rose crackling upwards to the skies,
When from the blaze rush'd Diethelm, Gessler's page,
Exclaiming, "Lady Bertha will be burnt!"
*Fürst.* Good heavens!
*The beams of the scaffold are heard falling.*
*Melch.* 'Twas she herself. Here had she been
Immured in secret by the Viceroy's orders.
Rudenz sprang up in frenzy. For we heard
The beams and massive pillars crashing down,
And through the volumed smoke the piteous shrieks
Of the unhappy lady.
*Fürst.* Is she saved?
*Melch.* Here was a time for promptness and decision!
Had he been nothing but our baron, then
We should have been most chary of our lives;
But he was our confederate, and Bertha
Honor'd the people. So, without a thought,
We risk'd the worst, and rush'd into the flames.
*Fürst.* But is she saved?
*Melch.* She is. Rudenz and I
Bore her between us from the blazing pile,
With crashing timbers toppling all around.
And when she had revived, the danger past,
And raised her eyes to meet the light of heaven,
The baron fell upon my breast; and then
A silent vow of friendship pass'd between us—
A vow that, temper'd in yon furnace heat,
Will last through ev'ry shock of time and fate.
*Fürst.* Where is the Landenberg?
*Melch.* Across the Brünig.[1]
No fault of mine it was that he who quench'd
My father's eyesight should go hence unharm'd.
He fled — I followed — overtook and seized him,
And dragg'd him to my father's feet. The sword
Already quiver'd o'er the caitiff's head,
When at the entreaty of the blind old man,
I spared the life for which he basely pray'd.
He swore URPHEDE,[2] never to return:
He'll keep his oath, for he has felt our arm.
*Fürst.* Thank God, our victory's unstain'd by blood!

*Children* [*running across the stage with fragments of wood*]. Liberty! Liberty! Hurrah, we're free!
*Fürst.* Oh! what a joyous scene! These children will,
E'en to their latest day, remember it.

*Girls bring in the cap upon a pole. The whole stage is filled with people.*
*Ruodi.* Here is the cap, to which we were to bow!
*Baum.* Commend us, how we shall dispose of it.
*Fürst.* Heavens! 'Twas beneath this cap my grandson stood!

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[1] **Brünig:** See note, Act II, Scene II, line 239, (page 502).

[2] **The Urphede:** was an oath of peculiar force. When a man, who was at feud with another, invaded his lands and was worsted, he often made terms with his enemy by swearing the *Urphede*, by which he bound himself to depart, and never to return with a hostile intention. Compare *parole*.

*Several voices.* Destroy the emblem of the tyrant's power!
Let it be burnt!
*Fürst.* No. Rather be preserved!
'Twas once the instrument of despots—now
'Twill be a lasting symbol of our freedom.

Peasants, *men, women, and children, some standing, others sitting upon the beams of the shattered scaffold, all picturesquely grouped, in a large semicircle.*

*Melch.* Thus now, my friends, with light and merry hearts,
We stand upon the wreck of tyranny;
And gallantly have we fulfill'd the oath
Which we at Rootli swore, Confederates!
*Fürst.* The work is but begun. We must be firm.
For, be assured, the king will make all speed
To avenge his Viceroy's death, and reinstate,
By force of arms, the tyrant we've expell'd.
*Melch.* Why, let him come, with all his armaments!
The foe within has fled before our arms;
We'll give him welcome warmly from without!
*Ruodi.* The passes to the country are but few,
And these we'll boldly cover with our bodies.
*Baum.* We are bound by an indissoluble league,
And all his armies shall not make us quail.

*Enter* Rösselmann *and* Stauffacher

*Rössel.* [*speaking as he enters*]. These are the awful judgments of the Lord!
*Peasant.* What is the matter?
*Rössel.* In what times we live!
*Fürst.* Say on, what is't? Ha, Werner, is it you?
What tidings?
*Peasant.* What's the matter?
*Rössel.* Hear and wonder!
*Stauff.* We are released from one great cause of dread.
*Rössel.* The Emperor is murdered.
*Fürst.* Gracious Heaven!

Peasants *rise up and throng round* Stauffacher.

*All.* Murder'd, the Emp'ror? What! The Emp'ror! Hear!
*Melch.* Impossible! How came you by the news?
*Stauff.* 'Tis true! Near Bruck,[1] by the assassin's hand,
King Albert fell. A most trustworthy man,
John Müller, from Schaffhausen, brought the news.
*Fürst.* Who dared commit so horrible a deed?
*Stauff.* The doer makes the deed more dreadful still;
It was his nephew, his own brother's child,
Duke John of Austria, who struck the blow.[2]
*Melch.* What drove him to so dire a parricide?
*Stauff.* The Emperor kept his patrimony back,
Despite his urgent importunities;
'Twas said, indeed, he never meant to give it,
But with a mitre[3] to appease the duke.
However this may be, the duke gave ear
To the ill counsel of his friends in arms;
And with the noble lords, Von Eschenbach,
Von Tegerfeld, Von Wart and Palm, resolved,
Since his demands for justice were despised,
With his own hands to take revenge at least.
*Fürst.* But say, how compass'd he the dreadful deed!
*Stauff.* The king was riding down from Stein to Baden,
Upon his way to join the court at Rheinfeld,—
With him a train of high-born gentlemen,
And the young Princes John and Leopold,
And when they'd reach'd the ferry of the Reuss,

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[1] **Bruck:** also Brugg, a small town about twenty miles north of the city of Lucerne.

[2] **Duke . . . blow:** John of Suabia (1290–c.1320) surnamed the Parricide, killed Albert I, King of Germany, on May 1, 1308, in reality, therefore, five months later than the action of the play.

[3] **with a mitre:** with an imperial bishopric.

The assassins forced their way into the boat,
To separate the Emperor from his suite.
His highness landed, and was riding on
Across a fresh plough'd field—where once, they say,
A mighty city stood in Pagan times—
With Habsburg's ancient turrets[1] full in sight,
Where all the grandeur of his line had birth—
When Duke John plunged a dagger in his throat,
Palm ran him thro' the body with his lance,
Eschenbach cleft his skull at one fell blow,
And down he sank, all weltering in his blood,
On his own soil, by his own kinsmen slain.
Those on the opposite bank, who saw the deed,
Being parted by the stream, could only raise
An unavailing cry of loud lament.
But a poor woman, sitting by the way,
Raised him, and on her breast he bled to death.
*Melch.* Thus has he dug his own untimely grave,
Who sought insatiably to grasp at all.
*Stauff.* The country round is fill'd with dire alarm.
The mountain passes are blockaded all,
And sentinels on ev'ry frontier set;
E'en ancient Zürich barricades her gates,
That for these thirty years have open stood,
Dreading the murd'rers, and th' avengers more.
For cruel Agnes[2] comes, the Hungarian queen,
To all her sex's tenderness a stranger,
Arm'd with the thunders of the church, to wreak
Dire vengeance for her parent's royal blood
On the whole race of those that murder'd him,—
Upon their servants, children, children's children,—
Nay, on the stones that build their castle walls.
Deep has she sworn a vow to immolate
Whole generations on her father's tomb,
And bathe in blood as in the dew of May.
*Melch.* Know you which way the murderers have fled?
*Stauff.* No sooner had they done the deed than they
Took flight, each following a different route,
And parted, ne'er to see each other more
Duke John must still be wand'ring in the mountains.
*Fürst.* And thus their crime has yielded them no fruits.
Revenge is barren. Of itself it makes
The dreadful food it feeds on; its delight
Is murder—its satiety despair.
*Stauff.* The assassins reap no profit by their crime;
But we shall pluck with unpolluted hands
The teeming fruits of their most bloody deed,
For we are ransomed from our heaviest fear;
The direst foe of liberty has fallen,
And, 'tis reported that the crown will pass
From Habsburg's house into another line;
The empire is determined to assert
Its old prerogative of choice, I hear.
*Fürst* and *several others.* Has any one been named to you?
*Stauff.* The Count
Of Luxembourg is widely named already.—
*Fürst.* 'Tis well we stood so staunchly by the Empire!
Now we may hope for justice, and with cause.
*Stauff.* The Emperor will need some valiant friends,
And he will shelter us from Austria's vengeance.
*The peasantry embrace.*

*Enter* Sacristan *with Imperial Messenger*

*Sacrist.* Here are the worthy chiefs of Switzerland!

---

[1] Habsburg's . . . turrets: built in 1020. The ruins are still standing.

[2] Agnes: daughter of Albrecht.

*Rössel.* and *several others.* Sacrist, what news?
*Sacrist.* A courier brings this letter.
*All* [*to* WALTER FÜRST]. Open and read it.
*Fürst* [*reading*]. "To the worthy men
Of Uri, Schwyz, and Unterwald, the Queen
Elizabeth[1] sends grace and all good wishes!"
*Many voices.* What wants the queen with us? Her reign is done.
*Fürst* [*Reads*]. "In the great grief and doleful widowhood
In which the bloody exit of her lord
Has plunged her majesty, she still remembers
The ancient faith and love of Switzerland."
*Melch.* She ne'er did that in her prosperity.
*Rössel.* Hush, let us hear!
*Fürst* [*Reads*]. "And she is well assured
Her people will in due abhorrence hold
The perpetrators of this damned deed.
On the three Cantons, therefore, she relies,
That they in nowise lend the murderers aid,
But rather that they loyally assist
To give them up to the avenger's hand,
Remembering the love and grace which they
Of old received from Rudolph's princely house."

*Symptoms of dissatisfaction among the peasantry.*

*Many voices.* The love and grace!
*Stauff.* Grace from the father[2] we, indeed, received;
But what have we to boast of from the son?[2]
Did he confirm the charter of our freedom,
As all preceding emperors had done?
Did he judge righteous judgment, or afford
Shelter or stay to innocence oppress'd?
Nay, did he e'en give audience to the envoys
We sent, to lay our grievances before him?
Not one of all these things e'er did the king,
And had we not ourselves achieved our rights
By resolute valor, our necessities
Had never touch'd him. Gratitude to him!
Within these vales he sowed not gratitude.
He stood upon an eminence—he might
Have been a very father to his people,
But all his aim and pleasure was to raise
Himself and his own house: and now may those
Whom he has aggrandized lament for him!
*Fürst.* We will not triumph in his fall, nor now
Recall to mind the wrongs we have endured.
Far be't from us! Yet, that we should avenge
The sovereign's death, who never did us good,
And hunt down those who ne'er molested us,
Becomes us not, nor is our duty. Love
Must bring its offerings free and unconstrain'd;
From all enforced duties death absolves—
And unto him we are no longer bound.
*Melch.* And if the queen laments within her bower,
Accusing Heaven in sorrow's wild despair;
Here see a people, from its anguish freed,
To that same Heav'n send up its thankful praise.
For who would reap regrets, must sow affection.
[*Exit the Imperial Courier*

*Stauff.* [*to the people*]. But where is Tell? Shall he, our freedom's founder,
Alone be absent from our festival?
He did the most—endured the worst of all.
Come—to his dwelling let us all repair,
And bid the saviour of our country hail!
[*Exeunt omnes*

---

[1] Elizabeth: Empress, wife of Albrecht.

[2] the father . . . son: See note, Act IV, Scene III, line 170, (page 531).

### SCENE II

*Interior of* TELL'S *Cottage. A fire burning on the hearth. The open door shows the scene outside.*

HEDWIG, WALTER *and* WILHELM

*Hedw.* Boys, dearest boys! your father comes to-day.
He lives, is free, and we and all are free!
The country owes its liberty to him!
*Walt.* And I, too, mother, bore my part in it;
I shall be named with him. My father's shaft
Went closely by my life, but yet I shook not!
*Hedw.* [*embracing him*]. Yes, yes, thou art restored to me again!
Twice have I given thee birth,—twice suffer'd all
A mother's agonies for thee, my child!
But this is past—I have you both, boys, both!
And your dear father will be back to-day.

*A* MONK *appears at the door*

*Wilh.* See, mother, yonder stands a holy friar;
He's asking alms, no doubt.
*Hedw.* Go lead him in,
That we may give him cheer, and make him feel
That he had come into the house of joy.
[*Exit, and returns immediately with a cup*

*Wilh.* [*to the* MONK]. Come in, good man. Mother will give you food!
*Walt.* Come in and rest, then go refresh'd away!
*Monk* [*glancing round in terror, with unquiet looks*]. Where am I? In what country?
*Walt.* Have you lost
Your way, that you are ignorant of this?
You are at Bürglen, in the land of Uri,
Just at the entrance of the Scheckenthal.[1]
*Monk* [*to* HEDWIG]. Are you alone? Your husband, is he here?
*Hedw.* I momently expect him. But what ails you?
You look as one whose soul is ill at ease.
Whoe'er you be, you are in want—take that [*Offers him the cup.*]
*Monk.* Howe'er my sinking heart may yearn for food,
I will taste nothing till you've promised me—
*Hedw.* Touch not my dress, nor yet advance one step.
Stand off, I say, if you would have me hear you.
*Monk.* Oh, by this hearth's bright, hospitable blaze,
By your dear children's heads, which I embrace—[*Grasps the boys.*]
*Hedw.* Stand back, I say! What is your purpose, man?
Back from my boys! You are no monk,—no, no.
Beneath that robe content and peace should dwell,
But neither lives within that face of thine.
*Monk.* I am the veriest wretch that breathes on earth.
*Hedw.* The heart is never deaf to wretchedness;
But thy look freezes up my inmost soul.
*Walt.* [*springs up*]. Mother, my father!
*Hedw.* Oh, my God!

*Is about to follow, trembles and stops.*

*Wilh.* [*running after his brother*]. My father!
*Walt.* [*without*]. Thou'rt here once more!
*Wilh.* [*without*]. My father, my dear father!
*Tell* [*without*]. Yes, here I am once more! Where is your mother?

*They enter*

*Walt.* There at the door she stands, and can no further,
She trembles so with terror and with joy.
*Tell.* Oh, Hedwig, Hedwig, mother of my children!
God has been kind and helpful in our woes.
No tyrant's hand shall e'er divide us more.
*Hedw.* [*falling on his neck*]. Oh, Tell, what have I suffer'd for thy sake!
MONK *becomes attentive.*

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[1] **Scheckenthal:** See note, Act III, Scene I, line 86, (page 509).

*Tell.* Forget it now, and live for joy alone!
I'm here again with you! This is my cot!
I stand again on mine own hearth!
*Wilh.* But, father,
Where is your cross-bow left? I see it not.
*Tell.* Nor shalt thou ever see it more, my boy.
It is suspended in a holy place,
And in the chase shall ne'er be used again.
*Hedw.* Oh, Tell! Tell!
[*Steps back, dropping his hand*
*Tell.* What alarms thee, dearest wife?
*Hedw.* How—how dost thou return to me? This hand—
Dare I take hold of it? This hand—Oh, God!
*Tell* [*with firmness and animation*]. Has shielded you and set my country free,
Freely I raise it in the face of Heaven.
[Monk *gives a sudden start—he looks at him.*]
Who is this friar here?
*Hedw.* Ah, I forgot him.
Speak thou with him; I shudder at his presence.
*Monk* [*stepping nearer*]. Are you that Tell that slew the Governor?
*Tell.* Yes, I am he. I hide the fact from no man.
*Monk.* You are that Tell! Ah! it is God's own hand
That hath conducted me beneath your roof.
*Tell* [*examining him closely*]. You are no monk. Who are you?
*Monk.* You have slain
The governor, who did you wrong. I, too,
Have slain a foe, who late denied me justice.
He was no less your enemy than mine.
I've rid the land of him.
*Tell* [*drawing back*]. Thou art—oh, horror!
In—children, children—in without a word.
Go, my dear wife! Go! Go! Unhappy man,
Thou shouldst be——
*Hedw.* Heav'ns, who is it?
*Tell.* Do not ask.
Away! away! the children must not hear it.
Out of the house—away! Thou must not rest
'Neath the same roof with this unhappy man!
*Hedw.* Alas! What is it? Come!
[*Exit with the children*

*Tell* [*to the* Monk]. Thou art the Duke
Of Austria—I know it. Thou hast slain
The Emperor, thy uncle and liege lord.
*John.* He robb'd me of my patrimony.
*Tell.* How!
Slain him—thy king, thy uncle! And the earth
Still bears thee! And the sun still shines on thee!
*John.* Tell, hear me ere you——
*Tell.* Reeking with the blood
Of him that was thy Emperor and kinsman,
Durst thou set foot within my spotless house?
Show thy fell visage to a virtuous man,
And claim the rites of hospitality?
*John.* I hoped to find compassion at your hands.
You also took revenge upon your foe!
*Tell.* Unhappy man! And dar'st thou thus confound
Ambition's bloody crime with the dread act
To which a father's direful need impell'd him?
Hadst thou to shield thy children's darling heads?
To guard thy fireside's sanctuary—ward off
The last, worst doom from all that thou didst love?
To Heaven I raise my unpolluted hands
To curse thine act and thee! I have avenged
That holy nature which thou hast profaned.
I have no part with thee. Thou art a murderer.
I've shielded all that was most dear to me.
*John.* You cast me off to comfortless despair!
*Tell.* My blood runs cold ev'n while I talk with thee.

Away! Pursue thine awful course! Nor longer
Pollute the cot where innocence abides!
[John *turns to depart*
*John.* I cannot live, and will no longer thus!
*Tell.* And yet my soul bleeds for thee;—gracious Heaven!
So young, of such a noble line, the grandson
Of Rudolph, once my lord and emperor,
An outcast—murderer—standing at my door,
The poor man's door—a suppliant, in despair!
*Covers his face.*
*John.* If thou hast power to weep, oh let my fate
Move your compassion—it is horrible.
I am—say rather was—a prince. I might
Have been most happy, had I only curb'd
Th' impatience of my passionate desires.
But envy gnaw'd my heart—I saw the youth
Of mine own cousin Leopold endow'd
With honor, and enrich'd with broad domains,
The while myself, that was in years his equal,
Was kept in abject and disgraceful nonage.
*Tell.* Unhappy man, thy uncle knew thee well
When he withheld both land and subjects from thee!
Thou, by thy mad and desperate act, hast set
A fearful seal upon his sage resolve.
Where are the bloody partners of thy crime?
*John.* Where'er the demon of revenge has borne them;
I have not seen them since the luckless deed.
*Tell.* Know'st thou the Empire's ban is out,—that thou
Art interdicted to thy friends, and given
An outlaw'd victim to thine enemies!
*John.* Therefore I shun all public thoroughfares,
And venture not to knock at any door—
I turn my footsteps to the wilds, and through
The mountains roam, a terror to myself.
For mine own self I shrink with horror back,
Should a chance brook reflect my ill-starr'd form.
If thou hast pity for a fellow mortal——
*Falls down before him.*
*Tell.* Stand up, stand up.
*John.* Not till thou shalt extend
Thy hand in promise of assistance to me.
*Tell.* Can I assist thee? Can a sinful man?
Yet get thee up—how black soe'er thy crime,—
Thou art a man. I, too, am one. From Tell
Shall no one part uncomforted. I will
Do all that lies within my power.
*John* [*Springs up and grasps him ardently by the hand*]. Oh, Tell,
You save me from the terrors of despair.
*Tell.* Let go my hand! Thou must away. Thou canst not
Remain here undiscover'd, and discover'd,
Thou canst not count on succor. Which way, then,
Wilt bend thy steps? Where dost thou hope to find
A place of rest?
*John.* Alas! alas! I know not.
*Tell.* Hear, then, what Heaven suggesteth to my heart.
Thou must to Italy—to Saint Peter's City—
There cast thyself at the Pope's feet,—confess
Thy guilt to him, and ease thy laden soul!
*John.* But will he not surrender me to vengeance?
*Tell.* Whate'er he does, receive as God's decree.
*John.* But how am I to reach that unknown land?
I have no knowledge of the way, and dare not
Attach myself to other travellers.
*Tell.* I will describe the road,[1] and mark me well!
You must ascend, keeping along the Reuss,

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[1] **the road:** Tell describes the way over the St. Gothard Pass (The "Road of Terror," *Schreckenstrasse*).

Which from the mountains dashes wildly down.
*John* [*in alarm*]. What! See the Reuss? The witness of my deed!
*Tell.* The road you take lies through the river's gorge,
And many a cross proclaims where travellers
Have perish'd 'neath the avalanche's fall.
*John.* I have no fear for nature's terrors, so
I can appease the torments of my soul.
*Tell.* At every cross, kneel down and expiate
Your crime with burning penitential tears—
And if you 'scape the perils of the pass,
And are not whelm'd beneath the drifted snows
That from the frozen peaks come sweeping down,
You'll reach the bridge[1] that hangs in drizzling spray;
Then if it yield not 'neath your heavy guilt,
When you have left it safely in your rear,
Before you frowns the gloomy Gate of Rocks,[2]
Where never sun did shine. Proceed through this
And you will reach a bright and gladsome vale.[3]
Yet must you hurry on with hasty steps,
For in the haunts of peace you must not linger.
*John.* O Rudolph, Rudolph, royal grandsire! thus
Thy grandson first sets foot within thy realms![4]
*Tell.* Ascending still, you gain the Gotthardt's heights,
On which the everlasting lakes repose,
That from the streams of heaven itself are fed.
There to the German soil you bid farewell,
And thence, with rapid course, another stream
Leads you to Italy, your promised land.
[*Ranz des Vaches sounded on Alp-horns is heard without.*]
But I hear voices! Hence!
*Hedw.* [*hurrying in*]. Where art thou, Tell?
Our father comes, and in exulting bands
All the confederates approach.
*John* [*covering himself*]. Woe's me!
I dare not tarry 'mid this happiness!
*Tell.* Go, dearest wife, and give this man to eat.
Spare not your bounty. For his road is long,
And one where shelter will be hard to find.
Quick! they approach.
*Hedw.* Who is he?
*Tell.* Do not ask!
And when he quits thee, turn thine eyes away,
That they may not behold the road he takes.
[Duke John *advances hastily towards* Tell, *but he beckons him aside and exit. When both have left the stage, the scene changes, and discloses in*

## Scene III

*The whole valley before* Tell's *house, the heights which enclose it occupied by peasants, grouped into tableaux. Some are seen crossing a lofty bridge, which crosses the Schechen.* Walter Fürst *with the two boys.* Werner *and* Stauffacher *come forward. Others throng after them. When* Tell *appears, all receive him with loud cheers.*

*All.* Long live brave Tell, our shield, our liberator!

*While those in front are crowding round* Tell, *and embracing him,* Rudenz *and* Bertha *appear. The former salutes the peasantry, the latter embraces* Hedwig. *The music from the mountains continues to play. When it has stopped,* Bertha *steps into the centre of the crowd.*

*Berth.* Peasants! Confederates! Into your league
Receive me here, that happily am the first

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[1] **the bridge:** See note, Act II, Scene II, line 315, (page 504).

[2] **Gate of Rocks:** the *Urner Loch* (Hole of Uri) widened in 1707 into a tunnel.

[3] **gladsome vale:** the Andermatt valley, 5000 feet above sea level.

[4] **thy realms:** Italy belonged to the Holy Roman Empire.

To find protection in the land of freedom.
To your brave hands I now entrust my rights.
Will you protect me as your citizen?
*Peasant.* Ay, that we will, with life and fortune both!
*Berth.* 'Tis well! And to this youth I give my hand,
A free Swiss maiden to a free Swiss man!
*Rud.* And from this moment all my serfs are free!
[*Music, and the curtain falls.*

## READING LIST

### England

*The Conquest of Granada*, John Dryden
*Aureng-Zebe*, John Dryden
*All for Love*, John Dryden
*The Rehearsal*, George Villiers
*Venice Preserved*, Thomas Otway
*Bury Fair*, Thomas Shadwell
*The Way of the World*, William Congreve
*The Beaux' Stratagem*, George Farquhar
*The Tragedy of Jane Shore*, Nicholas Rowe
*The Tragedy of Lady Jane Grey*, Nicholas Rowe
*Cato*, Joseph Addison
*The Conscious Lovers*, Richard Steele
*The Beggar's Opera*, John Gay
*The London Merchant, or the History of George Barnwell*, George Lillo
*The Life and Death of Tom Thumb the Great*, Henry Fielding
*Chronohotonthologos*, Henry Carey
*Douglas*, John Home
*The Good Natured Man*, Oliver Goldsmith
*The Rivals*, Richard B. Sheridan
*The Critic*, Richard B. Sheridan

### Italy

*The Mistress of the Inn*, Carlo Goldoni
*The Coffee Shop*, Carlo Goldoni

### Germany

*Minna von Barnhelm*, G. E. Lessing
*Götz von Berlichingen*, J. W. von Goethe
*Egmont*, J. W. von Goethe
*Iphigenia at Tauris* (*Iphigenia auf Tauris*), J. W. von Goethe
*The Maid of Orleans* (*Die Jungfrau von Orleans*), Friedrich von Schiller
*Mary Stuart* (*Maria Stuart*), Friedrich von Schiller

### France

*The Barber of Seville* (*Le Barbier de Seville*), Pierre Augustin Caron de Beaumarchais

## ESSAYS

*Short View of the Immorality and Profaneness of the English Stage*, Jeremy Collier
*On Contemporary Heroic Drama*, Joseph Addison
Nos. 39, 40, 42, 44, April 14, 16, 18, 20, 1711 in *The Spectator*
*On Restoration Comedy*, Richard Steele
Nos. 51, 65, 75, April 28, May 15, 26, 1711 in *The Spectator*
*An Essay on the Theatre; or a Comparison between Laughing and Sentimental Comedy*, Oliver Goldsmith
*On the Artificial Comedy of the Last Century*, Charles Lamb
*On the Comic Writers of the Last Century*, William Hazlitt
*Comic Dramatists of the Restoration*, Macaulay

## TOPICS

The Influence of Jonson on Eighteenth Century Comedy
The Influence of Molière on Eighteenth Century Comedy
Henry Fielding's Translation of *L'Avare* and *Aulularia* in *The Miser*
The London Theatres of the Eighteenth Century
An Eighteenth Century Theatre Restored (See *Theatre Arts*, April, 1924)
A Twentieth Century Congreve: The Plays of W. Somerset Maugham
D'Avenant's "Improvements" of Shakespeare's Plays
The English Heroic Drama
Rant in the Heroic Drama (see No. 40 of *The Spectator*)
Famous Actors and Actresses of the Eighteenth Century
The Vogue of Opera in the Eighteenth Century
Gounod's Opera Based on Goethe's *Faust*
Rossini's Opera *William Tell*
The Operatic Dramas of Metastasio (1698-1782)
The Vogue of the Two-Act Opera in England in the Eighteenth Century
The Sea Songs in the Operettas of Charles Dibdin
The Plays of Carlo Goldoni
The Modern Revival of Gay's *Beggar's Opera*
The Influence of David Garrick on the English Theatre
David Garrick in the Rôle of *Hamlet* (See Fielding's *Tom Jones*, Book XVI, Chapter V)
Life of Goldsmith
Life of Sheridan
Sheridan's Adaptation of August von Kotzebue's Plays in *The Stranger* and *Pizarro*
A Comparison of Schiller's Trilogy with the Greek Trilogy
Goethe's Analysis of *Hamlet* (See William Meister's Apprenticeship, Book IV, Chapters 1–13; —especially Chapter 13—and Book V, Chapters 4–9)
The Burlesque of the Heroic Tragi-comedy in Fielding's *Tom Thumb*
The Vicissitudes of the First Production of *She Stoops to Conquer*
Goldsmith's Attack on the Sentimental Comedy
The Sentimental Sub-Plot of Julia and Faulkland in Sheridan's *The Rivals*
Sentimentality in the Movies To-day

# NINETEENTH CENTURY DRAMA

Drama declined in the early nineteenth century. Whenever the world is torn by war,—as it was at that time by the Napoleonic Wars,—the standard of drama deteriorates. Amusement and diversion from the horrors of war are what the playgoing audiences desire. So melodramas or sentimental comedies or farces held the boards of the theatres.

However, except in France, this period of mediocrity was not followed shortly by a revival in the art and scope of the dramatist as has been true in our own twentieth century. Instead, there arose a romantic revival in poetry; and, a little later, a marked enthusiasm for the more leisurely art of the novel. The nineteenth century was primarily the era of the development of the novel, in which the scientific trend of the age was reflected in the analysis of character and study of the effects of environment and of heredity. This psychological study of humanity was not transferred to the drama until later in the century.

## FRANCE

The real development of the drama in the first half of the nineteenth century lay in France. Here in the early thirties a group of young poets and critics led by **Victor Hugo** (1802–1885) declared rebellion against the traditional school of classic dramatists. In the production of Hugo's romantic play *Hernani* (1830) they brought the war into the open. This play, which adopted the German personification of liberty and revolt in the idealization of the brigand hero, not only violated the Unities and the classic conventions which had for so long ruled French drama, but brought back upon the stage flowery poetry. It was full of passionate emotion, and enthusiastic outpourings about love, honor, and beauty.

In the prefaces to his plays, notably the famous preface to *Cromwell* (1827), Hugo laid down the principles of this young romantic revolt; and although the poet's challenge to classicism had only a temporary effect, his creed is that of all writers of romantic plays. He says: "What would the romantic drama do? . . . It would lead the audience constantly from sobriety to laughter, from mirthful excitement to heart-breaking emotion . . . For, as we have already proved, the drama is the grotesque in conjunction with the sublime; the soul within the body; it is tragedy beneath comedy." As to the style of drama, he declares for "a free, outspoken, sincere verse, which dares say everything without prudery; . . . which passes naturally from comedy to tragedy, from the sublime to the grotesque; by turns practical and poetical, both artistic and inspired, profound and impulsive."

Although the influence of this romantic school cropped up here and there throughout the century, the French stage was given over to realism until the advent of **Edmond Rostand** (1868–1918). His romantic tragedy *Cyrano de Bergerac*, presented in 1897 with Sara Bernhardt and Constant Coquelin in the leading rôles, was one of the startling successes of the end of the century. Rostand, however, had the twentieth century point of view: no matter how inspired the poetry, a romanticist must keep at least one foot on the solid earth of realism and psychology.

About the middle of the nineteenth century the younger **Dumas** (Alexandre Dumas, *fils*, 1824–1895) began producing his prose plays such as *Camille* (*La Dame Aux Camélias*) and *The Outer Edge of Society* (*Le Demi-Monde*). In these he presents a realistic study of social problems as revealed through individual temperaments. His later dramas he called definitely *thesis-plays;* that is, plays with the avowed purpose of discussing a moral or social question, especially one involving the relations between men and women, in order that he might sternly call the world to consideration of such fundamental problems. He himself offers no solution.

During the second Empire other French dramatists,—notably **Augustin Eugène Scribe** (1791–1861),—were producing a type nicknamed the "well-made" play (*la pièce bien faite*). These are witty five-act comedies, based on contemporary life, in which character matters very little and plot is all in all. They are constructed so as to hold the audience in suspense from the very beginning up to the ingenious conclusion.

Since there were no international copyright laws then, these "well-made" plays were translated into English, German, and Italian, and for many years eked out the dearth of native drama.

## ENGLAND

In England the theatre-going public was satisfied by such superficial French plays, or by melodramas adapted from the plays of the German **August von Kotzebue** (1761–1819); or else by spectacles at the Pantomimes. There were, to be sure, numerous playwrights in England; but the work of most of them has passed into oblivion except for historical reference. In the early part of the century the plays of **Douglas Jerrold** (1803–1857) and of **Dion Boucicault**[1] (1822–1890), popular as they were, still retained the sentimental or melodramatic ideas of the eighteenth century. Later **Tom Robertson** (1829–1871) sincerely tried to restore realism to the drama in his satirical plays of English life.

The only man who succeeded in writing plays that, in spite of their old-fashioned technique and their theatricality, still occasionally hold the stage, was **Edward George Bulwer,** first Earl Lytton (Bulwer-Lytton, 1803-1873). This dandified aristocrat found time in his long career in society and politics to produce a great amount of literary work. In 1838, the year in which he became a baronet, his romantic melodrama *The Lady of Lyons* was performed with great success by Macready at Covent Garden. In 1839 *Richelieu*, and in 1840 *Money*, were equally successful. Before his excursions into the field of the drama Bulwer-Lytton had won attention by his novels; and, like practically every one else in the Victorian age, he soon abandoned all other literary forms for this. To-day he is best known for his historical romances: *The Last Days of Pompeii; Rienzi, the Last of the Tribunes; The Last of the Barons;* and *Harold, the Last of the Saxon Kings.*

Literary play-lovers took refuge from the mediocrity of the theatre in reading drama at home. Hence arose the so-called "closet drama," professedly not written for actual performance. These plays were literature, pure and simple, rather than drama: for the long speeches and descriptive passages appealed to the eye rather than to the ear; and the words and phrases did not lend themselves to fluent speech. Moreover, the writers used Shakespeare as their model without any real understanding of the effect of the Elizabethan stage on his technique of play construction. They adopted his succession of scenes merely as an easy device for telling a dramatic story. Practically all the poets of the nineteenth century,—Scott, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Byron, Shelley, Browning, Tennyson, even Keats,—wrote one or more of these "closet dramas." Some of these plays found their way to the stage; but in most cases, in spite of the efforts of actors like Macready and Irving, their popularity was short-lived.

The great poets lacked the sense of the theatre which the practical playwright must have; the playwrights lacked the fine art of the poets. The one Englishman with the true dramatic instinct, Charles Dickens, turned to the prevalent literary type,—the novel. Had any one of the poetic geniuses of the age been willing to gain practical experience on the stage side of the curtain, perhaps the dramatic renascence of present times might have begun fifty years earlier. Nowadays a would-be dramatist is not content merely to read plays, nor even just to see them;

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[1] See page 625.

he wants to learn at first hand the actual technique of stage production. The twentieth century dramatist is reverting to the original Greek meaning of the word for dramatist, *poet,*—the *creator*, who must himself originate the technical as well as the artistic and literary part of his plays.

# THE LADY OF LYONS
# OR
# LOVE AND PRIDE[1]

### A Play in Five Acts

Edward George Bulwer-Lytton
1st Baron Lytton

*Produced anonymously at Covent Garden, London, in February, 1838*

### PERSONS REPRESENTED

Claude Melnotte
Colonel Damas
Beauseant
Glavis
Mons. Deschappelles
Landlord
Gaspar
Capt. Gervais (*First Officer*)
Capt. Dupont (*Second Officer*)
Major Desmoulins (*Third Officer.*)
Notary
Servant

Pauline
Madame Deschappelles
Widow Melnotte
Janet
Marian

## ACT I

### Scene I

*A room in the house of* M. Deschappelles, *at Lyons.* Pauline *reclining on a sofa;* Marian, *her maid, fanning her. Flowers and notes on a table beside the sofa.* Madame Deschappelles *seated at a table. The gardens are seen from the open windows.*

*Mme. Deschappelles.* Marian, put that rose a little more to the left. [Marian *alters the position of a rose in* Pauline's *hair.*] Ah, so—that improves the hair—the *tournure*—the *je ne sais quoi.* You are certainly very handsome, child—quite my style. I don't wonder that you make such a sensation—old, young, rich, and poor, do homage to the beauty of Lyons. Ah, we live again in our children, especially when they have our eyes and complexion.

*Pauline* [*languidly*]. Dear mother, you spoil your Pauline. [*Aside.*] I wish I knew who sent me these flowers.

*Mme. D.* No, child. If I praise you, it is only to inspire you with a proper ambition. You are born to make a great marriage. Beauty is valuable or worthless according as you invest the property to the best advantage. Marian, go and order the carriage.

[*Exit* Marian

*Paul.* Who can it be that sends me, every day, these beautiful flowers? How sweet they are!

*Enter* Servant

*Servant.* Monsieur Beauseant, madam.

*Mme. D.* Let him enter. Pauline, this is another offer; I know it is! Your father should engage an additional clerk to keep the account-book of your conquests.

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[1] Reprinted by permission of Walter H. Baker & Company, Boston, Mass.

*Enter* BEAUSEANT

*Beauseant.* Ah, ladies, how fortunate I am to find you at home! [*Aside.*] How lovely she looks! It is a great sacrifice I make marrying into a family in trade; they will be eternally grateful! [*Aloud.*] Madame, you will permit me a word with your charming daughter. [*Approaches* PAULINE, *who rises disdainfully.*] Mademoiselle, I have ventured to wait upon you, in a hope that you must long since have divined. Last night, when you outshone all the beauty of Lyons, you completed your conquest over me. You know that my fortune is not exceeded by any estate in the Province,—you know that but for the Revolution[1] which has defrauded me of my titles, I should be noble. May I, then, trust that you will not reject my alliance? I offer you my hand and heart.

*Paul.* [*aside*]. He has the air of a man who confers a favor. [*Aloud.*] Sir, you are very condescending. I thank you humbly; but being duly sensible of my own demerits, you must allow me to decline the honor you propose.

[*Curtesies and turns away*

*Beau.* Decline! impossible! You are not serious! Madame, suffer me to appeal to *you.* I am a suitor for your daughter's hand; the settlements shall be worthy her beauty and my station. May I wait on M. Deschappelles?

*Mme. D.* M. Deschappelles never interferes in the domestic arrangements. You are very obliging. If you were still a Marquis, or if my daughter were intended to marry a commoner, why, perhaps, we might give you the preference.

*Beau.* A commoner! We are all commoners in France now.

*Mme. D.* In France, yes; but there is a nobility still left in the other countries in Europe. We are quite aware of your good qualities, and don't doubt that you will find some lady more suitable to your pretensions. We shall be always happy to see you as an acquaintance, M. Beauseant. My dear child, the carriage will be here presently.

*Beau.* Say no more, Madame, say no more. [*Aside.*] Refused! and by a merchant's daughter! Refused! It will be all over Lyons before sunset! I will go and bury myself in my chateau, study philosophy, and turn woman-hater. Refused! They ought to be sent to a madhouse! Ladies, I have the honor to wish you a very good morning.

[*Exit* BEAUSEANT

*Mme. D.* How forward these men are. I think, child, we kept up our dignity. Any girl, however inexperienced, knows how to accept an offer, but it requires a vast deal of address to refuse one, with proper condescension and disdain. I used to practice it at school with the dancing-master.

*Enter* DAMAS

*Damas.* Good morning, cousin Deschappelles. Well, Pauline, are you recovered from last night's ball! So many triumphs must be very fatiguing. Even M. Glavis sighed most piteously when you departed; but that might be the effect of the supper.

*Paul.* M. Glavis, indeed!

*Mme. D.* M. Glavis!—as if my daughter would think of M. Glavis!

*Dam.* Hey-dey! Why not? His father left him a very pretty fortune, and his birth is higher than yours, cousin Deschappelles. But perhaps you are looking to M. Beauseant. His father was a Marquis before the Revolution.

*Paul.* M. Beauseant! Cousin, you delight in tormenting me.

*Mme. D.* Don't mind him, Pauline. Cousin Damas, you have no susceptibility of feeling; there is a certain indelicacy in all your ideas. M. Beauseant knows already that he is no match for my daughter.

*Dam.* Pooh! pooh! one would think you intended your daughter to marry a prince!

*Mme. D.* Well, and if I did; what then? Many a foreign prince——

*Dam.* [*interrupting her*]. Foreign prince! foreign fiddlestick! You ought to be ashamed of such nonsense at your time of life.

*Mme D.* My time of life! That is an expression never applied to any lady till she is sixty-nine and three-quarters; and only then by the clergyman of the parish.

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[1] Revolution: The French Revolution.

*Enter* SERVANT

*Serv.* Madame, the carriage is at the door. [*Exit* SERVANT

*Mme. D.* Come, child, put on your bonnet. You really have a very thorough-bred air—not at all like your poor father. [*Fondly.*] Ah, you little coquette, when a young lady is always making mischief, it is a sure sign that she takes after her mother.

*Paul.* Good day, cousin Damas, and a better humor to you. [*Going back to the table and taking the flowers.*] Who *could* have sent me these flowers?

[*Exeunt* PAULINE *and* MADAME DESCHAPPELLES

*Dam.* That would be an excellent girl if her head had not been turned. I fear she is now become incorrigible. Zounds, what a lucky fellow I am, to be still a bachelor! They may talk of the devotion of the sex, but the most faithful attachment in life is that of a woman in love—with herself! [*Exit*

## SCENE II

*The exterior of a small Village Inn—sign, the Golden Lion—a few leagues from Lyons, which is seen at a distance.*

*Beau.* [*without.*] Yes, you may bait[1] the horses; we shall rest here an hour.

*Enter* BEAUSEANT *and* GLAVIS

*Glavis.* Really, my dear Beauseant, consider that I have promised to spend a day or two with you at your chateau,—that I am quite at your mercy for my entertainment—and yet you are as silent and gloomy as a mute at a funeral, or an Englishman at a party of pleasure.

*Beau.* Bear with me. The fact is that I am miserable!

*Glav.* You! the richest and gayest bachelor in Lyons?

*Beau.* It is because I am a bachelor that I am miserable. Thou knowest Pauline, the only daughter of the rich merchant, Mons. Deschappelles?

*Glav.* Know her! Who does not? As pretty as Venus and as proud as Juno.

*Beau.* Her taste is worse than her pride. [*Drawing himself up.*] Know, Glavis, she has actually refused me!

*Glav.* [*aside*]. So she has me! Very consoling; in all cases of heart-ache, the application of another man's disappointment draws out the pain and allays the irritation. [*Aloud.*] Refused you! And wherefore?

*Beau.* I know not, unless it be because the Revolution swept away my father's title of marquis—and she will not marry a commoner. Now, as we have no noblemen left in France—as we are all citizens, and equals—she can only hope that, in spite of the war, some English milord or German count will risk his life by coming to Lyons and making her my lady. Refused me, and with scorn! By heaven, I'll not submit to it tamely. I'm in a perfect fever of mortification and rage. Refused me, indeed!

*Glav.* Be comforted, my dear fellow. I will tell you a secret: for the same reason she refused ME!

*Beau.* You! That's a very different matter. But give me your hand, Glavis; we'll think of some plan to humble her. By Jove, I should like to see her married to a strolling player!

*Enter* LANDLORD *and his* DAUGHTER, *from the Inn*

*Landlord.* Your servant, citizen Beauseant; servant, sir. Perhaps you will take dinner before you proceed to your chateau; our larder is most plentifully supplied.

*Beau.* I have no appetite.

*Glav.* Nor I. Still, it is bad traveling on an empty stomach. Come, landlord, let's see your bill. What have you got? [*Takes and looks over bill of fare. Shouts without.* "Long live the Prince! Long live the Prince!"]

*Beau.* The Prince! What Prince is that? I thought we had no princes left in France.

*Land.* Ha, ha! the lads always call him Prince. He has just won the prize in a shooting match, and they are taking him home in triumph.

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[1] bait: feed.

*Beau.* Him! And who's Mr. Him?

*Land.* Who should he be but the pride of the village, Claude Melnotte? Of course you have heard of Claude Melnotte.

*Glav.* [*giving back the bill of fare*]. Never had that honor. Soup—ragout of hare—roast chicken, and in short, all you have!

*Beau.* The son of old Melnotte the gardener?

*Land.* Exactly so; a wonderful young man.

*Beau.* How wonderful? Are his cabbages better than other people's?

*Land.* Nay, he doesn't garden any more; his father left him well off. He's only a genus.

*Glav.* A what?

*Land.* A genus!—a man who can do every thing in life, except any thing that's useful; that's a genus.

*Beau.* You raise my curiosity; proceed.

*Land.* Well then, about four years ago, old Melnotte died and left his son well to do in the world. We then all observed that a great change came over young Claude; he took to reading and Latin, and hired a professor from Lyons, who had so much in his head that he was forced to wear a great full-bottom wig to cover it. Then he took a fencing-master, and a dancing-master, and a music-master, and then he learned to paint; and at last it was said that young Claude was to go to Paris and set up for a painter. The lads laughed at him at first; but he is a stout fellow is Claude, and as brave as a lion, and soon taught them to laugh the wrong side of their mouths; and now all the boys swear by him, and all the girls pray for him.

*Beau.* A promising youth, certainly. And why do they call him Prince?

*Land.* Partly because he is at the head of them all and partly because he has such a proud way with him, and wears such fine clothes, and, in short, looks like a prince.

*Beau.* And what could have turned the foolish fellow's brain? The Revolution, I suppose?

*Land.* Yes, the revolution that turns us all topsy-turvy—the revolution of Love.

*Beau.* Romantic young Corydon.[1] And with whom is he in love!

*Land.* Why——but it is a secret, gentlemen.

*Beau.* Oh! certainly.

*Land.* Why, then, I hear from his mother, good soul, that it is no less a person than the beauty of Lyons, Pauline Deschappelles.

*Beau.* and *Glav.* Ha, ha!—capital!

*Land.* You may laugh, but it is as true as I stand here.

*Beau.* And what does the beauty of Lyons say to his suit?

*Land.* Lord, sir, she never even condescended to look at him, though when he was a boy he worked in her father's garden.

*Beau.* Are you sure of that?

*Land.* His mother says that Mademoiselle does not know him by sight.

*Beau.* [*taking* GLAVIS *aside*]. I have hit it—I have hit it; here is our revenge! Here is a prince for our haughty damsel. Do you take me?

*Glav.* Deuce take me if I do!

*Beau.* Blockhead! It's as clear as a map. What if we could make this elegant clown pass himself off as a foreign prince? Lend him money, clothes, equipage, for the purpose? Make him propose to Pauline—marry Pauline? Would it not be delicious?

*Glav.* Ha, ha! Excellent! But how shall we support the necessary expenses of his highness?

*Beau.* Pshaw! Revenge is worth a much larger sacrifice than a few hundred louis. As for details, my valet is the truest fellow in the world, and we shall have the appointment of his highness's establishment. Let's go to him at once, and see if he be really this Admirable Crichton.[2]

*Glav.* With all my heart,—but the dinner?

*Beau.* Always thinking of dinner. Hark ye, landlord, how far is it to young Melnotte's cottage? I should like to see such a prodigy.

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[1] Corydon: Stock name for a lover (from pastoral poetry).

[2] Admirable Crichton: James Crichton, a Scottish intellectual prodigy of the 16th century.

*Land.* Turn down the lane, then strike across the common, and you will see his mother's cottage.

*Beau.* True, he lives with his mother. [*Aside.*] We will not trust to an old woman's discretion; better send for him hither. I'll just step in and write him a note. Come, Glavis.

*Glav.* Yes,—Beauseant, Glavis and Co., manufacturers of princes, wholesale and retail; an uncommonly genteel line of business. Why so grave?

*Beau.* *You* think only of the sport—*I* of the revenge.

[*Exeunt within the Inn*

### SCENE III

*The interior of* MELNOTTE'S *Cottage; flowers placed here and there; a guitar on an oaken table, with a portfolio, etc.; a picture on an easel, covered by a curtain; fencing foils crossed over the mantel-piece; an attempt at refinement in spite of the homeliness of the furniture, etc.; a staircase to the right conducts to the upper story.*

[*Shout without.*] "Long live Claude Melnotte! Long live the prince!"

*Widow Melnotte.* Hark! There's my dear son; carried off the prize, I'm sure; and now he'll want to treat them all.

*Claude Melnotte* [*opening the door*]. What, you won't come in, my friends! Well, well, there's a trifle to make merry elsewhere. Good day to you all, good-day! [*Shout.*] "Hurrah! Long live prince Claude."

*Enter* CLAUDE MELNOTTE, *with a rifle in his hand*

*Mel.* Give me joy, dear mother! I've won the prize!—never missed one shot! Is it not handsome, this gun?

*Widow.* Humph! Well, what is it worth, Claude?

*Mel.* Worth! What is a ribbon worth to a soldier? Worth—everything! Glory is priceless!

*Widow.* Leave glory to great folks. Ah, Claude, Claude, castles in the air cost a vast deal to keep up. How is all this to end? What good does it do thee to learn Latin, and sing songs, and play on the guitar, and fence and dance, and paint pictures? All very fine; but what does it bring in?

*Mel.* Wealth, wealth, my mother! Wealth to the mind—wealth to the heart—high thoughts—bright dreams—the hope of fame—the ambition to be worthier to love Pauline.

*Widow.* My poor son! The young lady will never think of thee.

*Mel.* Do the stars think of us? Yet if the prisoner see them shine in his dungeon, would'st thou bid him turn away from *their* lustre? Even from this low cell, poverty, I lift my eyes to Pauline and forget my chains. [*Goes to the picture and draws aside the curtain.*] See, this is her image—painted from memory. Oh, how the canvas wrongs her! [*Takes up the brush and throws it aside.*] I shall never be a painter. I can paint no likeness but one, and that is above all art. I would turn soldier—France needs soldiers. But to leave the air that Pauline breathes! What is the hour? So late! I will tell thee a secret, mother. Thou knowest not that for the last six weeks I have sent every day the rarest flowers to Pauline. She wears them; I have seen them on her breast. Ah! and then the whole universe seemed filled with odors! I have now grown more bold; I have poured my worship into poetry; I have sent my verses to Pauline; I have signed them with my own name. My messenger ought to be back by this time. I bade him wait for an answer.

*Widow.* And what answer do you expect, Claude?

*Mel.* That which the Queen of Navarre sent to the poor troubadour: "Let me see the Oracle that can tell nations I am beautiful!" She will admit me. I shall hear her speak; I shall meet her eyes; I shall read upon her cheek the sweet thoughts that translate themselves into blushes. Then, then, oh, then she may forget that I am the peasant's son.

*Widow.* Nay, if she will but hear thee talk, Claude?

*Mel.* I foresee it all. She will tell me that desert is the true rank. She will give me a badge—a flower—a glove! Oh, rapture! I shall join the armies of the Republic; I shall rise; I shall win a name that beauty will not blush to hear. I shall return with the right to say to her: "See how love does not level the proud, but raises the humble!" Oh, how my heart swells within me! Oh, what glorious Prophets of the Future are Youth and Hope!

*Knock.*

*Widow.* Come in.

*Enter* GASPAR

*Mel.* Welcome, Gaspar, welcome! Where is the letter? Why do you turn away, man? Where is the letter? [GASPAR *gives him one.*] This! This is mine, the one I entrusted to thee. Didst thou not leave it?

*Gaspar.* Yes, I left it.

*Mel.* My own verses returned to me! Nothing else?

*Gas.* Thou wilt be proud to hear how thy messenger was honored. For thy sake, Melnotte, I have borne that which no Frenchman can bear without disgrace.

*Mel.* Disgrace, Gaspar! Disgrace?

*Gas.* I gave thy letter to the porter, who passed it from lackey to lackey till it reached the lady it was meant for.

*Mel.* It reached her, then; are you sure of that? It reached her,—well, well!

*Gas.* It reached her, and was returned to me with blows. Dost hear, Melnotte? With blows! Death! are we slaves still, that we are to be thus dealt with, we peasants?

*Mel.* With blows? No, Gaspar, no; not blows?

*Gas.* I could show thee the marks, if it were not so deep a shame to bear them. The lackey who tossed thy letter into the mire, swore that his lady and her mother never were so insulted. What could thy letter contain, Claude?

*Mel.* [*looking over the letter*]. Not a line that a serf might not have written to an empress. No, not one.

*Gas.* They promise thee the same greeting they gave me, if thou wilt pass that way. Shall we endure this, Claude?

*Mel.* [*wringing* GASPAR's *hand*]. Forgive me, the fault was mine; I have brought this on thee. I will not forget it; thou shalt be avenged! The heartless insolence!

*Gas.* Thou art moved, Melnotte. Think not of me; I would go through fire and water to serve thee; but—a blow! It is not the *bruise* that galls,—it is the *blush*, Melnotte!

*Mel.* Say, what message? How insulted? Wherefore? What the offence?

*Gas.* Did you not write to Pauline Deschappelles, the daughter of the rich merchant?

*Mel.* Well?

*Gas.* Are you not a peasant—a gardener's son? That was the offence. Sleep on it, Melnotte. Blows to a French citizen, blows! [*Exit*

*Widow.* Now you are cured, Claude!

*Mel.* [*tearing the letter*]. So do I scatter her image to the winds. I will stop her in the open streets; I will insult her; I will beat her menial ruffians; I will—— [*Turns suddenly to* WIDOW]. Mother, am I hump-backed—deformed—hideous?

*Widow.* You!

*Mel.* A coward—a thief—a liar?

*Widow.* You!

*Mel.* Or a dull fool—a vain, driveling, brainless idiot?

*Widow.* No, no.

*Mel.* What am I then—worse than all these? Why I am a peasant! What has a peasant to do with love? Vain Revolutions, why lavish your cruelty on the great? Oh, that we—we the hewers of wood and drawers of water—had been swept away, so that the proud might learn what the world would be without us!

*Enter* SERVANT *from the Inn*

*Serv.* A letter for Citizen Melnotte.

*Mel.* A letter! From her, perhaps. Who sent thee?

*Serv.* Who? Monsieur—I mean Citizen Beauseant, who stops to dine at the Golden Lion, on his way to his chateau.

*Mel.* Beauseant! [*Reads.*] "Young man, I know thy secret: thou lovest above thy station. If thou hast wit, courage and discretion, I can secure to thee the realization of thy most sanguine hopes; and the sole condition I ask in return is, that thou shalt be steadfast to thine own ends. I shall demand from thee a solemn oath to marry her whom thou lovest; to bear her to thine home on thy wedding night. I am serious; if thou wouldst learn more lose not a moment, but follow the bearer of this letter to thy friend and patron,

"Charles Beauseant."

*Mel.* Can I believe my eyes? Are our own passions the sorcerers that raise up for us spirits of good or evil? I will go instantly. [*Exit* Servant

*Widow.* What is this, Claude?

*Mel.* "Marry her whom thou lovest"—"bear her to thine own home." O, revenge and love! which of you is the stronger? [*Gazing on the picture.*] Sweet face, thou smilest on me from the canvas. Weak fool that I am, do I then love her still? No, it is the vision of my own romance that I have worshipped; it is the reality to which I bring scorn for scorn. Adieu, mother; I will return anon. My brain reels—the earth swims before me. [*Looking again at the letter.*] No it is *not* mockery; I do not dream! [*Exit*

## ACT II

### Scene I

*The Gardens of* M. Deschappelles' *House at Lyons; the House seen at the back of the Stage.*

*Enter* Beauseant *and* Glavis *from the House*

*Beau.* Well, what think you of my plot? Has it not succeeded to a miracle? The instant that I introduced his highness, the Prince of Como, to the pompous mother and the scornful daughter, it was all over with them. He came—he saw—he conquered; and, though it is not many days since he arrived, they have already promised him the hand of Pauline.

*Glav.* It is lucky, though, that you told them his Highness traveled incognito, for fear the Directory[1] (who are not very fond of princes) should lay him by the heels; for he has a wonderful wish to keep up his rank, and scatters our gold about with as much coolness as if he were watering his own flowerpots.

*Beau.* True, he is damnably extravagant. I think the sly dog does it out of malice. However, it must be owned that he reflects credit on his loyal subjects, and makes a very pretty figure in his fine clothes with my diamond snuff-box.

*Glav.* And my diamond ring! But do you think that he will be firm to the last? I fancy I see symptoms of relenting. He will never keep up his rank, if he once lets out his conscience.

*Beau.* His oath binds him; he cannot retreat without being foresworn, and those low fellows are always superstitious. But, as it is, I tremble lest he be discovered. That bluff Colonel Damas (Madame Deschappelles' cousin) evidently suspects him. We must make haste and conclude the farce. I have thought of a plan to end it this very day.

*Glav.* This very day! Poor Pauline! her dream will be soon over.

*Beau.* Yes, this day they shall be married; this evening, according to his oath, he shall carry his bride to the Golden Lion, and then pomp, equipage, retinue, and title, all shall vanish at once; and her Highness the Princess shall find that she has refused the son of a Marquis to marry the son of a gardener. Oh, Pauline! once loved, now hated, yet still not relinquished, thou shalt drain the cup to the dregs—thou shalt know what it is to be humbled!

*Enter, from the house,* Melnotte *as the Prince of Como, leading in* Pauline; Madame Deschappelles *fanning herself; and Colonel* Damas

Beauseant *and* Glavis *bow respectfully.* Pauline *and* Melnotte *walk apart.*

*Mme. D.* Good morning, gentlemen. Really, I am so fatigued with laughter, the dear Prince is so entertaining. What wit he has! Any one might see that he has spent his whole life in courts.

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[1] the Directory: The body of five men which held the executive power, under the constitution of 1795, from 1795 to 1799 in the First Republic of France.

*Dam.* And what the deuce do you know about courts, cousin Deschappelles? You women regard men just as you buy books—you never care what is in them, but how they are bound and lettered. 'Sdeath, I don't think you would even look at your bible, if it had not a title to it.

*Mme. D.* How coarse you are, cousin Damas; quite the manners of a barrack. You don't deserve to be one of our family; really we must drop your acquaintance when Pauline marries. I cannot patronize any relations that would discredit my future son-in-law, the Prince of Como.

*Mel.* [*advancing*]. These are beautiful gardens, Madame. [Beauseant *and* Glavis *retire.*] Who planned them?

*Mme. D.* A gardener named Melnotte, your Highness—an honest man who knew his station. I can't say as much for his son—a presuming fellow, who—ha! ha!—actually wrote verses—such doggerel!—to my daughter.

*Paul.* Yes, how you would have laughed at them, Prince, *you* who write such beautiful verses!

*Mel.* This Melnotte must be a monstrous impudent person.

*Dam.* Is he good-looking?

*Mme. D.* I never notice such *canaille*;[1] an ugly mean-looking clown, if I remember right.

*Dam.* Yet I heard your porter say he was wonderfully like his Highness.

*Mel.* [*taking snuff*]. You are complimentary.

*Mme. D.* For shame, cousin Damas! Like the Prince, indeed!

*Paul.* Like you! Ah, mother, like our beautiful Prince! I'll never speak to you again, cousin Damas.

*Mel.* [*aside*]. Humph!—rank is a great beautifier! I never passed for an Apollo while I was a peasant. If I am so handsome as a prince, what should I be as an emperor? [*Aloud.*] Monsieur Beauseant, will you honor me? [*Offers snuff.*]

*Beau.* No, your Highness, I have no small vices.

*Mel.* Nay, if it were a vice you'd be sure to have it, Monsieur Beauseant.

*Mme. D.* Ha! ha!—how very severe!—what wit!

*Beau.* [*in a rage and aside*]. Curse his impertinence.

*Mme. D.* What a superb snuff-box!

*Paul.* And what a beautiful ring!

*Mel.* You like the box; a trifle—interesting perhaps from associations—a present from Louis XIV. to my great-great-grandmother. Honor me by accepting it.

*Beau.* [*plucking him by the sleeve*]. How! What the devil! My box! Are you mad! It is worth five hundred louis.

*Mel.* [*unheeding him and turning to* Pauline]. And you like this ring! Ah, it has indeed a lustre since your eyes have shone on it. [*Placing it on her finger.*] Henceforth hold me, sweet enchantress, the Slave of the Ring.

*Glav.* [*pulling him*]. Stay, stay; what are you about? My maiden aunt's legacy—a diamond of the first water. You shall be hanged for swindling, sir.

*Mel.* [*pretending not to hear*]. It is curious, this ring: it is the one with which my grandfather, the Doge of Venice, married the Adriatic!

Madame *and* Pauline *examine the ring.*

*Mel.* [to Beauseant *and* Glavis]. Fie, gentlemen, princes must be generous. [*Turns to* Damas, *who watches them closely*]. These kind friends have my interest so much at heart, that they are as careful of my property as if it were their own.

*Beau.* and *Glav.* [*confusedly*]. Ha! ha! Very good joke that!

*Appear to remonstrate with* Melnotte *in dumb show.*

*Dam.* What's all that whispering? I am sure there is some juggle here. Hang me, if I think he is an Italian, after all. 'Gad! I'll try him. Servitore umillissimo Excellenza.[2]

*Mel.* Hum; what does he mean, I wonder.

*Dam.* Godo di vedervi in buona salute.[3]

*Mel.* Hem—hem!

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[1] canaille: rabble.

[2] Servitore . . . Excellenza: Your Excellency's most humble servant.

[3] Godo . . . salute: I am glad to see you in good health.

*Dam.* Fa bel tempo; che si dice di nuovo?[1]

*Mel.* Well, sir, what's all that gibberish?

*Dam.* Oh, oh!—only Italian, your Highness! The Prince of Como does not understand his own language!

*Mel.* Not as you pronounce it; who the deuce could!

*Mme. D.* Ha! ha! cousin Damas, never pretend to what you don't know.

*Paul.* Ha! ha! cousin Damas; *you* speak Italian, indeed!

*Makes a mocking gesture at him.*

*Beau.* [*to* Glavis]. Clever dog!—how ready!

*Glav.* Ready, yes; with my diamond ring! Damn his readiness!

*Dam.* Laugh at me! Laugh at a colonel in the French army! The fellow's an impostor; I know he is. I'll see if he understands fighting as well as he does Italian. [*Goes up to him, and aside.*] Sir, you are a jackanapes! Can you construe that?

*Mel.* No, sir; I never construe affronts in the presence of ladies. By-and-by I shall be happy to take a lesson—or give one.

*Dam.* I'll find the occasion, never fear.

*Mme. D.* Where are you going, cousin?

*Dam.* To correct my Italian. [*Exit into house*

*Beau.* [*to* Glavis]. Let us after, and pacify him; he evidently suspects something.

*Glav.* Yes, but my diamond ring!

*Beau.* And my box! We are overtaxed, fellow-subject. We must stop the supplies, and dethrone the Prince.

*Glav.* Prince! He ought to be heir-apparent to King Stork![2] [*Exeunt into house*

*Mme. D.* Dare I ask your Highness to forgive my cousin's insufferable vulgarity?

*Paul.* Oh, yes; you will forgive his manners for the sake of his heart.

*Mel.* And for the sake of his cousin. Ah, Madame, there is one comfort in rank—we are so sure of our position that we are not easily affronted. Besides, M. Damas has bought the right of indulgence from his friends, by never showing it to his enemies.

*Paul.* Ah! he is, indeed, as brave in action as he is rude in speech. He rose from the ranks to his present grade,—and in two years.

*Mel.* In two years!—two years, did you say?

*Mme. D.* [*aside*]. I don't like leaving girls alone with their lovers; but with a prince, it would be so ill-bred to be prudish. [*Exit into house*

*Mel.* You can be proud of your connection with one who owes his position to merit, not birth.

*Paul.* Why, yes; but still——

*Mel.* Still what, Pauline?

*Paul.* There is something glorious in the heritage of command. A man who has ancestors is like a representative of the past.

*Mel.* True; but, like other representatives, nine times out of ten he is a silent member. Ah, Pauline, not to the past, but to the future, looks true nobility, and finds its blazon in posterity.

*Paul.* You say this to please me, who have no ancestors; but you, Prince, must be proud of so illustrious a race.

*Mel.* No, no; I would not, were I fifty times a prince, be a pensioner on the dead! I honor birth and ancestry when they are regarded as the incentive to exertion, not the title-deeds to sloth. I honor the laurels that overshadow the graves of our fathers. It is our fathers I emulate, when I desire that beneath the evergreen I myself have planted, my own ashes may repose. Dearest, could'st thou but see with my eyes.

*Paul.* I cannot forego pride when I look on thee, and think that thou lovest me. Sweet Prince, tell me again of thy palace by the Lake of Como; it is so pleasant to hear of thy splendors, since thou didst swear to me that they would be desolate without Pauline; and when thou describest them, it is with a mocking lip and a noble scorn, as if custom had made thee disdain greatness.

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[1] **Fa . . . nuovo:** Fine weather. What news is there?

[2] **King Stork:** who gobbled up his whole kingdom—of the frogs. (See Æsop's Fable.)

*Mel.* Nay, dearest, nay; if thou wouldst have me paint
The home to which, could Love fulfil its prayers,
This hand would lead thee, listen![1] A deep vale
Shut out by Alpine hills from the rude world,
Near a clear lake, margined by fruits of gold
And whispering myrtles; glassing softest skies
As cloudless, save with rare and roseate shadows,
As I would have thy fate!
*Paul.* My own dear love!
*Mel.* A palace lifting to eternal summer
Its marble walls, from out a glossy bower
Of coolest foliage musical with birds,
Whose songs should syllable thy name! At noon
We'd sit beneath the arching vines, and wonder
Why Earth could be unhappy, while the Heavens
Still left us youth and love! We'd have no friends
That were not lovers; no ambition, save
To excel them all in love; we'd read no books
That were not tales of love—that we might smile
To think how poorly eloquence of words
Translates the poetry of hearts like ours!
And when night came, amidst the breathless Heavens
We'd guess what star should be our home when love
Becomes immortal; while the perfumed light
Stole through the mists of alabaster lamps,
And every air was heavy with the sighs
Of orange groves and music from sweet lutes,
And murmurs of low fountains that gush forth
I' the midst of roses! Dos't thou like the picture?
*Paul.* Oh! as the bee upon the flower, I hang
Upon the honey of thy eloquent tongue!
Am I not blest? And if I love too wildly,
Who would not love thee, like Pauline?
*Mel.* [*bitterly*]. Oh, false one!
It is the *prince* thou lovest, not the *man;*
If in the stead of luxury, pomp, and power,
I had painted poverty, and toil and care,
Thou had'st found no honey on my tongue. Pauline,
That is not love!
*Paul.* Thou wrong'st me cruel Prince.
'Tis true, I might not at the first been won,
Save through the weakness of a flattered pride;
But *now!* Oh! trust me,—could'st thou fall from power and sink—
*Mel.* As low as that poor gardener's son
Who dared to lift his eyes to thee?
*Paul.* Even then,
Methinks thou would'st be only made more dear
By the sweet thought that I could prove how deep
Is woman's love! We are like the insects, caught
By the poor glittering of a garish flame.
But oh, the wings once scorched, the brightest star
Lures us no more; and by the fatal light
We cling till death!
*Mel.* Angel! [*Aside.*] O conscience! conscience!
It must not be! Her love hath grown a torture
Worse than her hate. I will at once to Beauseant,
And——ha! he comes. Sweet love, one moment leave me.
I have business with these gentlemen—I—I
Will forthwith join you.
*Paul.* Do not tarry long.
[*Exit into house*

*Enter* Beauseant and Glavis, *from house*

*Mel.* Release me from my oath. I will not marry her!
*Beau.* Then thou art perjured.

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[1] nay . . . listen: The reader will observe that Melnotte evades the request of Pauline. He proceeds to describe a home, which he does not say he possesses, but to which he would lead her "*could Love fulfil its prayers.*"

*Mel.* No, I was not in my senses when I swore to thee to marry her. I was blind to all but her scorn—deaf to all but my passion and my rage. Give me back my poverty and my honor.

*Beau.* It is too late; you must marry her, and this day. I have a story already coined, and sure to pass current. This Damas suspects thee; he will set the police to work; thou wilt be detected—Pauline will despise and execrate thee. Thou wilt be sent to the common gaol as swindler.

*Mel.* Fiend!

*Beau.* And in the heat of the girl's resentment (you know of what resentment is capable) and the parent's shame, she will be induced to marry the first that offers—even perhaps your humble servant.

*Mel.* You! No! that were worse—for thou hast no mercy! I will marry her—I will keep my oath. Quick, then, with the damnable invention thou art hatching; quick, if thou would'st not have me strangle thee or myself.

*Glav.* What a tiger! Too fierce for a Prince; he ought to have been the Grand Turk.

*Beau.* Enough, I will despatch; be prepared.

[*Exeunt* Beauseant *and* Glavis *into house*

*Enter* Damas, *from the house, with two swords*

*Dam.* Now, then, sir, the ladies are no longer your excuse. I have brought you a couple of dictionaries; let us see if your Highness can find out the Latin for *bilbo.*[1]

*Mel.* Away, sir! I am in no humor for jesting.

*Dam.* I see you understand something of the grammar; you decline the noun substantive "small sword" with great ease; but that won't do—you must take a lesson in *parsing.*[2]

*Mel.* Fool!

*Dam.* Sir! A man who calls me a fool insults the lady who bore me. There's no escape for you—fight you shall or—

*Mel.* Oh, enough, enough! Take your ground. [*They fight;* Damas *is disarmed.* Melnotte *takes up the sword and returns it to* Damas *respectfully.*] A just punishment to the brave soldier who robs the state of its best property—the sole right to his valor and his life!

*Dam.* Sir, you fence exceedingly well. You must be a man of honor. I don't care a jot whether you are a prince; but a man who has carte and tierce[3] at his fingers' ends must be a gentleman.

*Mel.* [*aside*]. Gentleman! Ay, I was a gentleman before I turned conspirator; for honest men are the gentlemen of Nature! Colonel, they tell me you rose from the ranks.

*Dam.* I did.

*Mel.* And in two years?

*Dam.* It is true; that's no wonder in our army at present. Why, the oldest general in the service is scarcely thirty, and we have some of two-and-twenty.

*Mel.* Two-and-twenty?

*Dam.* Yes; in the French army, now-a-days, promotion is not a matter of purchase. We are all heroes because we may be all generals. We have no fear of the cypress because we may all hope for the laurel.[4]

*Mel.* A general at two-and-twenty [*turning away*]. Sir, I may ask you a favor one of these days.

*Dam.* Sir, I shall be proud to grant it. It is astonishing how much I like a man after I've fought with him.

*Hides the swords.*

*Enter* Madame *and* Beauseant, *from house*

*Mme. D.* Oh, Prince! Prince! What do I hear? You must fly—you must quit us!

*Mel.* I!

*Beau.* Yes, Prince. Read this letter, just received from my friend at Paris, one of the Directory. They are very suspicious of princes, and your family take part with the Austrians. Knowing that I introduced your Highness at

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[1] bilbo: sword.

[2] parsing: a play on "passing" (with a broad *a*); thrust in fencing.

[3] carte . . . tierce: positions in fencing.

[4] cypress, laurel: symbols of death and of glory, respectively.

Lyons, my friend writes to me to say that you must quit the town immediately or you will be arrested—thrown into prison—perhaps guillotined! Fly! I will order horses to your carriage instantly. Fly to Marseilles; there you can take ship to Leghorn.

*Mme. D.* And what's to become of Pauline? Am I not to be a mother to a princess, after all?

*Enter* PAULINE *and* M. DESCHAPPELLES, *from house*

*Paul.* [*throwing herself into* MELNOTTE'S *arms*]. You must leave us—leave Pauline!

*Beau.* Not a moment is to be wasted.

*Mons. Deschappelles.* I will go to the magistrates and inquire——

*Beau.* Then he is lost. The magistrates, hearing he is suspected, will order his arrest.

*Mme. D.* And shall I not be Princess Dowager?

*Beau.* Why not? There is only one thing to be done; send for the priest—let the marriage take place at once, and the Prince carry home a bride!

*Mel.* Impossible! [*Aside.*] Villain! I know not what I say.

*Mme. D.* What, lose my child?

*Beau.* And gain a Princess!

*Mme. D.* Oh, Monsieur Beauseant, you are so very kind. It must be so. We ought not to be selfish; my daughter's happiness is at stake. She will go away, too, in a coach and six!

*Paul.* Thou art here still. I cannot part from thee; my heart will break.

*Mel.* But thou wilt not consent to this hasty union: thou wilt not wed an outcast—a fugitive.

*Paul.* Ah! If thou art in danger, who should share it but Pauline?

*Mel.* [*aside*]. Distraction! If the earth could swallow me!

*M. D.* Gently!—gently! The settlements—the contracts—my daughter's dowry!

*Mel.* The dowry! I am not base enough for that; no, not one farthing!

*Beau.* [*to* MADAME]. Noble fellow! Really, your good husband is too mercantile in these matters. Monsieur Deschappelles, you hear his Highness. We can arrange the settlements by proxy; 'tis the way with the people of quality.

*M. D.* But——

*Mme. D.* Hold your tongue! Don't expose yourself!

*Beau.* I will bring the priest in a trice. Go in all of you and prepare; the carriage shall be at the door before the ceremony is over.

*Mme. D.* Be sure there are six horses, Beauseant. You are very good to have forgiven us for refusing you; but, you see—a prince!

*Beau.* And such a prince! Madame, I cannot blush at the success of so illustrious a rival. [*Aside.*] Now will I follow them to the village, enjoy my triumph, and to-morrow, in the hour of thy shame and grief, I think, proud girl, thou wilt prefer even these arms to those of the gardener's son.

[*Exit* BEAUSEANT

*Mme. D.* Come, Monsieur Deschappelles; give your arm to her Highness that is to be.

*M. D.* I don't like doing business in such a hurry; 'tis not the way with the house of Deschappelles & Co.

*Mme. D.* There now; you fancy you are in the counting house, don't you?

*Pushes him to* PAULINE.

*Mel.* Stay,—stay Pauline; one word. Have you no scruple—no fear? Speak, it is not yet too late.

*Paul.* When I loved thee, thy fate became mine. Triumph or danger, joy or sorrow, I am by thy side.

*Dam.* Well, well, Prince, thou art a lucky man to be so loved. She is a good little girl in spite of her foibles. Make her as happy as if she were not be a princess [*slapping him on the shoulder*]. Come, sir, I wish you joy. Young—tender—lovely; zounds, I envy you!

*Mel.* [*who has stood apart in gloomy abstraction*]. Do YOU![1]

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[1] On the stage the following lines are added:—

Do you? Wise judges are we of each other.
"Woo, wed, and bear her home!" so runs the bond
To which I sold myself—and then—what then?
Away! I will not look beyond the Hour.
Like children in the dark, I dare not face
The shades that gather round me in the distance.
You envy me; I thank you—you may read
My joy upon my brow—I thank you, sir!
If hearts had audible language, you would hear
How mine would answer when you talk of ENVY.

## ACT III

### Scene I

*The Exterior of the Golden Lion—time, twilight. The moon rises during the Scene.*

*Enter* Landlord *and his* Daughter, *from the Inn.*

*Land.* Ha! ha! ha! Well, I never shall get over it. Our Claude is a prince with a vengeance now. His carriage breaks down at my inn—ha! ha!

*Janet.* And what airs the young lady gives herself! "Is this the best room you have, young woman?" with such a toss of the head!

*Land.* Well, get in, Janet, get in and see to the supper; the servants must sup before they go back.

[*Exeunt* Landlord *and* Janet

*Enter* Beauseant *and* Glavis

*Beau.* You see our Princess is lodged at last. One stage more, and she'll be at her journey's end—the beautiful palace at the foot of the Alps! Ha! ha!

*Glav.* Faith, I pity the poor Pauline, especially if she's going to sup at the Golden Lion [*makes a wry face*]. I shall never forget that cursed ragout.

*Enter* Melnotte, *from the Inn*

*Beau.* Your servant, my Prince; you reigned most worthily. I condole with you on your abdication. I am afraid that your Highness's retinue are not very faithful servants. I think they will quit you at the moment of your fall; 'tis the fate of greatness. But you are welcome to your fine clothes—also the diamond snuff-box, which Louis the XIV. gave to your great-great-grandmother.

*Glav.* And the ring with which your grandfather the Doge of Venice married the Adriatic.

*Mel.* Have I kept my oath, gentleman? Say, have I kept my oath?

*Beau.* Most religiously.

*Mel.* Then you have done with me and mine. Away with you!

*Beau.* How, knave?

*Mel.* Look you; our bond is over. Proud conquerors that we are, we have won the victory over a simple girl; compromised her honor—embittered her life—blasted in their very blossoms all the flowers of her youth. This is your triumph,—it is my shame! [*Turns to* Beauseant.] Enjoy that triumph, but not in my sight. I *was* her betrayer—I *am* her protector! Cross but her path—one word of scorn, one look of insult—nay, but one quiver of that mocking lip, and I will teach thee that bitter word thou hast graven eternally in this heart—*Repentance!*

*Beau.* His Highness is most grandiloquent.

*Mel.* Highness me no more! Beware! Remorse has made me a new being. Away with you! There is danger in me. Away!

*Glav.* [*aside*]. He's an awkward fellow to deal with; come away, Beauseant.

*Beau.* I know the respect due to rank. Adieu, my Prince. Any commands at Lyons? Yet hold; I promised you 200 louis on your wedding-day; here they are.

*Mel.* [*dashing the purse to the ground*]. I *gave* you revenge, I did not *sell* it. Take up your silver, Judas; take it. Ay, it is fit you should learn to stoop.

*Beau.* You will beg my pardon for this some day. [*Aside to* Glavis.] Come to my chateau. I shall return hither to-morrow to learn how Pauline likes her new dignity.

*Mel.* Are you not gone yet?

*Beau.* Your Highness' most obedient, most faithful——

*Glav.* And most humble servants. Ha! ha!

[*Exeunt* Beauseant *and* Glavis

*Mel.* Thank heaven, I had no weapon, or I should have slain them. Wretch! what can I say—where turn? On all sides mockery—the very boors within—[*Laughter from the Inn.*] 'Sdeath, if even in this short absence the exposure should have chanced! I will call her. We will go hence. I have already sent one I can trust to my mother's house; there, at least, none can insult her agony—gloat upon her shame.

There alone must she learn what a villain she has sworn to love.

[*As he turns to the door*

*Enter* PAULINE *from the Inn.*

*Paul.* Ah, my Lord, what a place! I never saw such rude people. They stare and wink so. I think the very sight of a prince, though he travels incognito, turns their honest heads. What a pity the carriage should break down in such a spot. You are not well; the drops stand on your brow—your hand is feverish.

*Mel.* Nay it is but a passing spasm; the air——
*Paul.* Is not the soft air of your native south. [*Pause.*]
How pale he is; indeed thou art not well.
Where are our people? I will call them.
*Mel.* Hold!
I—I am well.
*Paul.* Thou art! Ah! now I know it.
Thou fanciest, my kind Lord—I know thou dost—
Thou fanciest these rude walls, these rustic gossips,
Brick'd floors, sour wine, coarse viands, vex Pauline.
And so they might, but thou art by my side,
And I forget all else.

*Enter* LANDLORD, *the servants peeping and laughing over his shoulder*

*Land.* My Lord—your Highness—
Will your most noble Excellency choose——
*Mel.* Begone, sir!

[*Exit* LANDLORD, *laughing*

*Paul.* How could they have learn'd thy rank?
One's servants are so vain! Nay, let it not
Chafe thee, sweet Prince! A few short days, and we
Shall see thy palace by its lake of silver,
And—nay, nay, spendthrift, is thy wealth of smiles
Already drained, or dost thou play the miser?
*Mel.* Thine eyes would call up smiles in deserts, fair one!
Let us escape these rustics. Close at hand
There is a cot, where I have bid prepare
Our evening lodgement; a rude, homely roof,
But honest, where our welcome will not be
Made torture by the vulgar eyes and tongues
That are as death to Love! A heavenly night!
The wooing air and the soft moon invite us.
Wilt walk? I pray thee, now. I know the path,
Ay, every inch of it.
*Paul.* What, *thou!* Methought
Thou wert a stranger in these parts. Ah! truant,
Some village beauty lured thee;—thou art now
Grown constant.
*Mel.* Trust me.
*Paul.* Princes are so changeful.
*Mel.* Come, dearest, come.
*Paul.* Shall I not call our people to light us?
*Mel.* Heaven will lend its stars for torches!
It is not far.
*Paul.* The night breeze chills me.
*Mel.* Nay,
Let me thus mantle thee; it is not cold.
*Paul.* Never, beneath thy smile!
*Mel.* [*aside*]. Oh, Heaven! forgive me! [*Exeunt*

### SCENE II

MELNOTTE'S *cottage*—WIDOW *bustling about. A table spread for supper.*

*Widow.* So, I think that looks very neat. He sent me a line so blotted that I can scarcely read it, to say he would be here almost immediately. She must have loved him well indeed, to have forgotten his birth: for though he was introduced to her in disguise, he is too honorable not to have revealed to her the artifice which her love only could forgive. Well, I do not wonder at it; for though my son is not a prince, he ought to be one, and that's almost as good. [*Knock at the door.*] Ah! here they are.

*Enter* Melnotte *and* Pauline

*Widow.* Oh, my boy, the pride of my heart!—welcome, welcome! I beg pardon, Ma'am, but I do love him so!

*Paul.* Good woman, I really—Why, Prince, what is this? Does the old woman know you? Oh, I guess you have done her some service: another proof of your kind heart, is it not?

*Mel.* Of my kind heart, ay.

*Paul.* So, you know the prince?

*Widow.* Know him, Madame? Ah, I begin to fear it is you who know him not.

*Paul.* Do you think she is mad? Can we stay here, my Lord? I think there's something very wild about her.

*Mel.* Madame, I——No, I cannot tell her! My knees knock together. What a coward is a man who has lost his honor! Speak to her—speak to her—[*to his mother*]—tell her that—oh, Heaven, that I were dead!

*Paul.* How confused he looks! This strange place—this woman—what can it mean? I half suspect. Who are you, Madame; who are you? Can't you speak? Are you struck dumb?

*Widow.* Claude, you have not deceived her? Oh, shame upon you! I thought that before you went to the altar she was to have known all?

*Paul.* All! What? My blood freezes in my veins!

*Widow.* Poor lady! Dare I tell her, Claude? [Melnotte *makes a sign of assent.*] Know you not then, Madame, that this young man is of poor though honest parents? Know you not that you are wedded to my son, Claude Melnotte?

*Paul.* Your son! Hold! hold! do not speak to me. [*Approaches* Melnotte *and lays her hand on his arm.*] Is this a jest? Is it? I know it is. Only speak—one word—one look—one smile. I cannot believe—I, who loved thee so—I cannot believe that thou art such a——No, I will not wrong thee by a harsh word. Speak!

*Mel.* Leave us; have pity on her, on me: leave us.

*Widow.* Oh, Claude! That I should live to see thee bowed by shame—thee of whom I was so proud!

[*Exit* Widow *by the staircase*

*Paul.* Her son! her son!
*Mel.* Now, lady, hear me.
*Paul.* Hear thee!
Ay, speak. Her son! Have fiends a parent? Speak,
That thou may'st silence curses. Speak!
*Mel.* No, curse me:
Thy curse would blast me less than thy forgiveness.
*Paul.* [*laughing wildly*]. "This is thy palace where the perfumed light
"Steals through the mists of alabaster lamps,
"And every air is heavy with the sighs
"Of orange groves, and music from sweet lutes,
"And murmurs of low fountains, that gush forth
"I' the midst of roses! Dost thou like the picture?"
*This* is my bridal home, and *thou* my bridegroom!
O fool! O dupe! O wretch! I see it all—
The bye-word and the jeer of every tongue
In Lyons! Hast thou in thy heart one touch
Of human kindness? If thou hast, why, kill me,
And save thy wife from madness. No, it cannot,
It cannot be! This is some horrid dream.
I shall wake soon. [*Touching him.*] Art flesh? art man? or but
The shadows seen in sleep? It is too real.
What have I done to thee, how sinn'd against thee,
That thou shouldst crush me thus?
*Mel.* Pauline! by pride
Angels have fallen ere thy time; by pride—
That sole alloy of thy most lovely mould—
The evil spirit of a bitter love
And a revengeful heart, had power upon thee.
From my first years, my soul was filled with thee:
I saw thee, midst the flowers the lowly boy

Tended, unmarked by thee, a spirit of bloom,
And joy and freshness, as if spring itself
Were made a living thing, and wore thy shape!
I saw thee, and the passionate heart of man
Enter'd the breast of the wild-dreaming boy;
And from that hour I grew—what to the last
I shall be—thine adorer! Well, this love,
Vain, frantic, guilty, if thou wilt, became
A fountain of ambition and bright hope.
I thought of tales that by the winter hearth
Old gossips tell—how maidens, sprung from Kings,
Have stoop'd from their high sphere; how Love, like Death,
Levels all ranks, and lays the shepherd's crook
Beside the sceptre. Thus I made my home
In the soft palace of a fairy Future.
My father died; and I, the peasant-born,
Was my own lord. Then did I seek to rise
Out of the prison of my mean estate;
And, with such jewels as the exploring mind
Brings from the caves of knowledge, buy my ransom
From those twin gaolers of the daring heart—
Low birth and iron fortune. Thy bright image,
Glass'd in my soul, took all the hues of glory,
And lured me on to those inspiring toils
By which man masters men!
A midnight student o'er the dreams of sages:
For thee I sought to borrow from each grace,
And every muse, such attributes as lend
Ideal charms to love. I thought of thee,
And passion taught me poesy; of thee,
And on the painter's canvas grew the life
Of beauty. Art became the shadow
Of the dear star-light of thy haunting eyes!
Men called me vain, some mad; I heeded not,
But still toil'd on, hoped on, for it was sweet,
If not to win, to feel more worthy thee!

*Paul.* Has he a magic to exorcise hate?

*Mel.* At last, in one mad hour, I dared to pour
The thoughts that burst their channels into song,
And sent them to thee; such a tribute, lady,
As beauty rarely scorns, even from the meanest.
The name—appended by the burning heart
That long'd to show its idol what bright things
It had created—yea, the enthusiast's name
That should have been thy triumph, was thy scorn!
That very hour—when passion, turned to wrath,
Resembled hatred most; when thy disdain
Made my whole soul a chaos—in that hour
The tempters found me a revengeful tool
For their revenge! Thou hadst trampled on the worm—
It turn'd and stung thee!

*Paul.* Love, sir, hath no sting.
What was the slight of a poor powerless girl,
To the deep wrong of this most vile revenge?
Oh, how I loved this man! a serf! a slave!

*Mel.* Hold, lady! No, not slave! Despair is free.
I will not tell thee of the throes, the struggles,
The anguish, the remorse. No, let it pass,
And let me come to such most poor atonement
Yet in my power. Pauline!

*Approaching her with great emotion, and about to take her hand.*

*Paul.* No, touch me not!
I know my fate. You are, by law, my tyrant;

And I—oh Heaven! a peasant's wife! I'll work,
Toil, drudge, do what thou wilt; but touch me not;
Let my wrongs make me sacred.
*Mel.* Do not fear me.
Thou dost not know me, Madame. At the altar
My vengeance ceased, my guilty oath expired.
Henceforth, no image of some marbled saint,
Niched in cathedral's aisles, is hallow'd more
From the rude hand of sacrilegious wrong.
I am thy husband; nay, thou need'st not shudder:
Here, at thy feet, I lay a husband's rights.
A marriage thus unholy—unfulfilled—
A bond of fraud—is, by the laws of France,
Made void and null. To-night, then, sleep—in peace.
To-morrow, pure and virgin as this morn
I bore thee, bathed in blushes, from the altar,
Thy father's arms shall take thee to thy home.
The law shall do thee justice, and restore
Thy right to bless another with thy love.
And when thou art happy, and hast half forgot
Him who so loved, so wrong'd thee, think at least
Heaven left some remnant of the angel still
In that poor peasant's nature!—Ho! my mother!

Widow *comes down stairs*

Conduct this lady—(she is not my wife;
She is our guest, our honored guest, my mother,)
To the poor chamber where the sleep of virtue
Never beneath my father's honest roof,
E'en villains dared to mar. Now, lady, now
I think thou wilt believe me. Go, my mother.
*Widow.* She is not thy wife!
*Mel.* Hush! hush! for mercy sake
Speak not, but go. [Widow *ascends the stairs*
*Mel.* [*sinking down.*] All angels bless and guard her!

## ACT IV

### Scene I

*The Cottage as before*—Melnotte *seated before a table, writing implements, etc.*—(*Day breaking.*)

*Mel.* Hush, hush!—she sleeps at last. Thank Heaven, for awhile she forgets even that I live. Her sobs, which have gone to my heart the whole, long desolate night, have ceased. All calm—all still! I will go now; I will send this letter to Pauline's father. When he arrives, I will place in his hands my own consent to the divorce, and then, O France! my country! accept among thy protectors, thy defenders, the peasant's son! Our country is less proud than custom, and does not refuse the blood, the heart, the right hand of the poor man!

Widow *comes down stairs*

*Widow.* My son, thou hast acted ill, but sin brings its own punishment. In the hour of thy remorse, it is not for a mother to reproach thee.

*Mel.* What is past is past. There is a future left to all men, who have the virtue to repent and the energy to atone. Thou shalt be proud of thy son, yet; meanwhile, remember this poor lady has been grievously injured. For the sake of thy son's conscience, respect, honor, bear with her. If she weep, console; if she chide, be silent. 'Tis but a little while more; I shall send an express fast as horse can speed to her father. Farewell! I shall return shortly.

*Widow.* It is the only course left to thee; thou wert led astray, but thou art not hardened. Thy heart is right still, as ever it was, when, in thy most ambitious hopes, thou wert never ashamed of thy poor mother.

*Mel.* Ashamed of thee! No, if I yet endure, yet live, yet hope, it is only because I would not die till I have redeemed the noble heritage I have lost—the heritage I took unstained from thee and my dead father—a proud conscience and an honest name. I shall win them back yet. Heaven bless you. [*Exit*

*Widow.* My dear Claude! how my heart bleeds for him.

PAULINE *looks down from above, and after a pause descends*

*Paul.* Not here! He spares me that pain at least. So far he is considerate—yet the place seems still more desolate without him. Oh, that I could hate him; the gardener's son! and yet how nobly he—no—no—no, I will not be so mean a thing as to forgive him!

*Widow.* Good morning, Madame. I would have waited on you if I had known you were stirring.

*Paul.* It is no matter, Ma'am; your son's wife ought to wait on herself.

*Widow.* My son's wife; let not that thought vex you, Madame, he tells me that you will have your divorce. And I hope I shall live to see him smile again. There are maidens in this village, young and fair, Madame, who may yet console him.

*Paul.* I dare say—they are very welcome; and when the divorce is got he will marry again. I am sure I hope so. [*Weeps.*]

*Widow.* He could have married the richest girl in the province, if he had pleased it; but his head was turned, poor child! he could think of nothing but you. [*Weeps.*]

*Paul.* Don't weep, *mother!*

*Widow.* Ah, he has behaved very ill, I know; but love is so headstrong in the young. Don't weep, Madame.

*Paul.* So, as you were saying; go on.

*Widow.* Oh, I cannot excuse him, Ma'am; he was not in his right senses.

*Paul.* But he always—always [*sobbing.*] loved—loved me, then?

*Widow.* He thought of nothing else. See here—he learnt to paint that he might take your likeness [*Uncovers the picture*]. But that's all over now; I trust you have cured him of his folly. But, dear heart, you have had no breakfast.

*Paul.* I can't take anything—don't trouble yourself.

*Widow.* Nay, Madam, be persuaded; a little coffee will refresh you. Our milk and eggs are excellent. I will get out Claude's coffee-cup—it is of real Sevres; he saved up all his money to buy it three years ago, because the name of *Pauline* was inscribed on it.

*Paul.* Three years ago! Poor Claude! Thank you, I think I will have some coffee. Oh, if he were but a poor gentleman, even a merchant; but a gardener's son! and what a home! Oh, no, it is too dreadful!

*They seat themselves at the table.* BEAUSEANT *opens the lattice and looks in.*

*Beau.* So—so—the coast is clear. I saw Claude in the lane; I shall have an excellent opportunity.

*Shuts the lattice and knocks at the door.*

*Paul.* [*starting*]. Can it be my father? He has not sent for him yet? No, he cannot be in such a hurry to get rid of me.

*Widow.* It is not time for your father to arrive yet; it must be some neighbor.

*Paul.* Don't admit any one. [WIDOW *opens the door.* BEAUSEANT *pushes her aside and enters.*] Oh! Heavens! that hateful Beauseant! This is indeed bitter.

*Beau.* Good morning, Madam! Oh, Widow, your son begs you will have the goodness to go to him in the village. He wants to speak to you on particular business. You'll find him at the inn, or the grocer's shop, or the baker's, or at some other friend's of your family. Make haste!

*Paul.* Don't leave me, mother! Don't leave me!

*Beau.* [*with great respect*]. Be not alarmed, Madame. Believe me your friend, your servant.

*Paul.* Sir, I have no fear of you, even in this house! Go, Madame, if your son wishes it. I will not contradict his commands whilst at least he has still the right to be obeyed.

*Widow.* I don't understand this; however, I shan't be long gone. [*Exit*

*Paul.* Sir, I divine the object of your visit. You wish to exult in the humiliation of one who humbled you. Be it so; I am prepared to endure all, even your presence.

*Beau.* You mistake me, Madame—Pauline, you mistake me. I come to lay my fortune at your feet. You must already be disenchanted with this impostor; these walls are not worthy to be hallowed by your beauty. Shall that form be clasped in the arms of a base-born peasant? Beloved, beautiful Pauline! fly with me; my carriage waits without—I will bear you to a home more meet for your reception. Wealth, luxury, station—all shall yet be yours. I forget your past disdain—I remember only your beauty and my unconquerable love.

*Paul.* Sir, leave this house; it is humble, but a husband's roof, however lowly, is, in the eyes of God and man, the temple of a wife's honor! Know that I would rather starve—yes, starve—with him who has betrayed me, than accept your lawful hand, even were you the prince whose name he bore! Go!

*Beau.* What, is not your pride humbled yet?

*Paul.* Sir, what was pride in prosperity, in affliction becomes virtue.

*Beau.* Look round: these rugged floors, these homely walls, this wretched struggle of poverty for comfort—think of this, and contrast with such a picture the refinement, the luxury, the pomp that the wealthiest gentleman of Lyons offers to the loveliest lady. Ah, hear me!

*Paul.* Oh, my father, why did I leave you? Why am I thus friendless? Sir, you see before you a betrayed, injured, miserable woman! Respect her anguish!

Melnotte *opens the door and silently pauses at the threshold*

*Beau.* No! let me rather thus console it; let me snatch from those lips one breath of that fragrance which never should be wasted on the low churl, thy husband.

*Paul.* Help! Claude! Claude! Have I no protector?

*Beau.* Be silent! [*Showing a pistol.*] See, I do not come unprepared even for violence. I will brave all things—thy husband and all his race—for thy sake. Thus, then, I clasp thee!

*Mel.* [*dashing him to the other end of the stage*]. Pauline—look up, Pauline! thou art safe.

*Beau.* [*leveling his pistol*]. Dare you thus insult a man of my birth, ruffian?

*Paul.* Oh, spare him—spare my husband? Beauseant—Claude—no—no! [*Faints*

*Mel.* Miserable trickster! shame upon you! Brave devices to terrify a woman! Coward, you tremble. You have outraged the laws. You know that your weapon is harmless; you have the courage of the mountebank, not the bravo! Pauline, there is no danger.

*Beau.* I wish thou wert a gentleman. As it is, thou art beneath me. Good day, and a happy honeymoon. [*Aside.*] I will not die till I am avenged.

[*Exit* Beauseant

*Mel.* I hold her in these arms—the last embrace!
Never, ah, never more, shall this dear head
Be pillowed on the heart that should have shelter'd
And has betray'd! Soft—soft! One kiss, poor wretch!
No scorn on that pale lip forbids me now.
One kiss. So ends all record of my crime.
It is the seal upon the tomb of Hope,
By which, like some lost, sorrowing angel, sits
Sad Memory evermore. She breathes—she moves—
She wakes to scorn, to hate, but not to shudder
Beneath the touch of my abhorred love.
[*Places her on a seat.*]
There—we are strangers now!

*Paul.* All gone—all calm—
Is *every* thing a dream? Thou art safe, unhurt.
I do not love thee; but—but I am a woman,
And—and—no blood is spilt?

*Mel.* No, lady, no;

My guilt has not deserved so rich a blessing
As even danger in thy cause.

*Enter* Widow

*Widow.* My son, I have been every where in search of you. Why did you send for me?

*Mel.* I did not send for you.

*Widow.* No! But I must tell you your express has returned.

*Mel.* So soon! Impossible!

*Widow.* Yes, he met the lady's mother and father on the road; they were going into the country on a visit. Your messenger says that Monsieur Deschappelles turned almost white with anger, when he read your letter. They will be here almost immediately. Oh, Claude, Claude, what will they do to you? How I tremble! Ah, Madame, do not let them injure him—if you knew how he doated on you!

*Paul.* Injure him! No, Ma'am, be not afraid. My father! how shall I meet him? How go back to Lyons, the scoff of the whole city! Cruel, cruel, Claude! [*In great agitation.*] Sir, you have acted most treacherously.

*Mel.* I know it, Madame.

*Paul.* [*aside*]. If he would but ask me to forgive him! [*Aloud.*] I never can forgive you, sir!

*Mel.* I never dared to hope it.

*Paul.* But you are my husband now, and I have sworn to—to love you, sir.

*Mel.* That was under a false belief, Madam; Heaven and the laws will release you from your vow.

*Paul.* [*aside*]. He will drive me mad! If he were but less proud—if he would but ask me to remain. Hark, hark! I hear the wheels of the carriage. [*Aloud.*] Sir—Claude, they are coming; have you no word to say ere it is too late? Quick—speak!

*Mel.* I can only congratulate you on your release. Behold your parents!

*Enter* Monsieur *and* Madame Deschappelles *and* Colonel Damas

*M. D.* My child!—my child!

*Mme. D.* Oh, my poor Pauline. What a villainous hovel this is! Old woman, get me a chair; I shall faint, I certainly shall. What will the world say? Child, you have been a fool. A mother's heart is easily broken.

*Dam.* Ha, ha! Most noble Prince, I am sorry to see a man of your quality in such a condition. I am afraid your Highness will go to the House of Correction.

*Mel.* Taunt on, sir. I spared *you* when you were unarmed—I am unarmed now. A man who has no excuse for crime, is indeed defenceless.

*Dam.* There's something fine in the rascal, after all!

*M. D.* Where is the impostor? Are you thus shameless, traitor? Can you brave the presence of that girl's father?

*Mel.* Strike me, if it please you; you *are* her father.

*Paul.* Sir—sir, for my sake; whatever his guilt, he has acted nobly in atonement.

*Mme. D.* Nobly! Are you mad, girl? I have no patience with you—to disgrace all your family thus. Nobly! Oh you abominable, hardened, pitiful, mean, ugly villain!

*Dam.* Ugly! Why he was beautiful, yesterday.

*Paul.* Madam, this is his roof, and he is my husband. Respect your daughter, and let blame fall alone on her.

*Mme. D.* You—you—oh, I'm choking.

*M. D.* Sir, it were idle to waste reproach upon a conscience like yours. You renounce all pretensions to the person of this lady?

*Mel.* I do. [*Gives a paper.*] Here is my consent to a divorce—my full confession of the fraud, which annuls marriage. Your daughter has been foully wronged—I grant it, sir; but her own lips will tell you, that from the hour in which she crossed this threshold, I returned to my own station, and respected hers. Pure and inviolate as when, yestermorn, you laid your hand upon her head and blessed her, I yield her back to you. For myself, I deliver you forever from my presence. An outcast and a criminal, I seek some distant land, where I may mourn my sin and pray for your daughter's peace. Farewell—farewell to you all forever!

*Widow.* Claude, Claude, you will not leave your poor mother? *She* does not disown you in your sorrow; no, not even in your guilt. No divorce can separate a mother from her son.

*Paul.* This poor widow teaches me my duty. No, mother no—for you are now *my* mother also!—nor should any law, human or divine, separate the wife from her husband's sorrows. Claude, Claude, all is forgotten—forgiven; I am thine forever!

*Mme. D.* What do I hear? Come away, or never see my face again.

*M. D.* Pauline, *we* never betrayed you. Will you forsake us for him?

*Paul.* [*going back to her father*]. Oh, no! but you will forgive him, too. We will live together; he shall be your son.

*M. D.* Never! Cling to him and forsake your parents! His home shall be yours, his fortune yours, his fate yours. The wealth I have acquired by honest industry shall never enrich the dishonest man.

*Paul.* And you would have a wife enjoy luxury while a husband toils! Claude, take me; thou canst not give me wealth, titles, station, but thou canst give me a true heart. I will work for thee, tend thee, bear with thee, and never, never shall these lips reproach thee for the past.

*Dam.* I'll be hanged if I am not going to blubber.

*Mel.* This is the heaviest blow of all! What a heart I have wronged! Do not fear me, sir; I am not at all hardened. I would not rob her of a holier love than mine. Pauline! angel of love and mercy! your memory shall lead me back to virtue! The husband of a being so beautiful in her noble and sublime tenderness may be poor—may be lowborn—(there is no guilt in the decrees of Providence!)—but he should be one who can look thee in the face without a blush, to whom thy love does not bring remorse, who can fold thee to his heart and say, "*Here* there is no deceit!" I am not that man!

*Dam.* [*aside to* Melnotte]. Thou art a noble fellow, notwithstanding, and wouldst make an excellent soldier. Serve in my regiment. I have had a letter from the Directory. Our young General[1] takes the command of the army in Italy; I am to join him at Marseilles; I will depart this day if thou wilt go with me.

*Mel.* It is the favor I would have asked thee, if I had dared. Place me wherever a foe is most dreaded—wherever France most needs a life.

*Dam.* There shall not be a forlorn hope without thee.

*Mel.* There is my hand. Mother, your blessing. I shall see you again, a better man than a prince, a man who has bought the right to high thoughts by brave deeds. And thou, thou, so wildly worshipped, so guiltily betrayed, all is not yet lost, for thy memory, at least, must be mine till death. If I live, the name of him thou hast once loved shall not rest dishonored. If I fall, amidst the carnage and the roar of battle my soul will fly back to thee, and Love shall share with Death my last sigh. More—more would I speak to thee, to pray, to bless. But, no; when I am less unworthy, I will utter it to Heaven! I cannot trust myself to——[*turning to* Deschappelles]. Your pardon, sir; they are my last words. Farewell! [*Exit*

*Dam.* I will go after him. France will thank me for this. [*Exit*

*Paul.* [*starting from her father's arms*]. Claude, Claude, my husband!

*M. D.* You have a father still!

## ACT V

### Scene I

*The Streets of Lyons*

(TWO YEARS AND A HALF FROM THE DATE OF ACT IV)

*Enter* First, Second *and* Third Officers

*1st Officer.* Well, here we are at Lyons with gallant old Damas. It is his native place.

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[1] our . . . General: Napoleon Bonaparte.

*2nd Officer.* Yes; he has gained a step in the army since he was here last. The Lyonese ought to be very proud of stout General Damas.

*3rd Officer.* Promotion is quick in the French army. This mysterious Morier, the hero of Lodi[1] and the favorite of the Commander-in-Chief, has risen to a colonel's rank in two years and a half.

*Enter* DAMAS *as a General*

*Dam.* Good morrow, gentlemen. I hope you will amuse yourselves during our short stay in Lyons. It is a fine city; improved since I left it. Ah! it is a pleasure to grow old, when the years that bring decay to ourselves do but ripen the prosperity of our country. You have not met with Morier?

*1st Officer.* No; we were just speaking of him.

*2nd Officer.* Pray, General, can't you tell us who this Morier really is?

*Dam.* Is? Why, a Colonel in the French army.

*3rd Officer.* True. But what was he at first?

*Dam.* At first? Why a baby, in long clothes, I suppose.

*1st Officer.* Ha! ha! Ever facetious, General.

*2nd Officer* [*to* THIRD]. The General is sore upon this point; you will only chafe him. Any commands, General?

*Dam.* None. Good day to you!

[*Exeunt* SECOND *and* THIRD OFFICERS

*Dam.* Our comrades are very inquisitive. Poor Morier is the subject of a vast deal of curiosity.

*1st Officer.* Say interest, rather, General. His constant melancholy, the loneliness of his habits, his daring valor, his brilliant rise in the profession, your friendship, and the favors of the Commander-in-chief—all tend to make him as much the matter of gossip as of admiration. But where is he, General? I have missed him all the morning.

*Dam.* Why, Captain, I'll let you into a secret. My young friend has come with me to Lyons in hopes of finding a miracle.

*1st Officer.* A miracle!

*Dam.* Yes, a miracle. In other words, a constant woman.

*1st Officer.* Oh; an affair of love.

*Dam.* Exactly so. No sooner did he enter Lyons than he waved his hand to me, threw himself from his horse, and is now, I warrant, asking every one, who can know anything about the matter, whether a certain lady is still true to a certain gentleman.

*1st Officer.* Success to him!—and of that success there can be no doubt. The gallant Colonel Morier, the hero of Lodi, might make his choice out of the proudest families in France.

*Dam.* Oh, if pride be a recommendation, the lady and her mother are most handsomely endowed. By the way, Captain, if you should chance to meet with Morier, tell him he will find me at the hotel.

*1st Officer.* I will, General. [*Exit*

*Dam.* Now will I go to the Deschappelles, and make a report to my young Colonel. Ha! by Mars, Bacchus, Apollo—here comes Monsieur Beauseant!

*Enter* BEAUSEANT

Good morrow, Monsieur Beauseant! How fares it with you?

*Beau.* [*aside*]. Damas! That is unfortunate. If the Italian campaign should have filled his pockets, he may seek to baffle me in the moment of my victory. [*Aloud.*] Your servant, General,—for such, I think, is your distinction. Just arrived in Lyons?

*Dam.* Not an hour ago. Well, how go on the Deschappelles? Have they forgiven you in that affair of young Melnotte? You had some hand in that notable device, eh?

*Beau.* Why, less than you think for. The fellow imposed upon me. I have set it all right now. What has become of him? He could not have joined the army, after all. There is no such name in the books.

*Dam.* I know nothing about Melnotte. As you say, I never heard the name in the Grand Army.

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[1] Lodi: Scene of Napoleon's victory over the Austrians in 1796.

*Beau.* Hem!—you are not married, General?

*Dam.* Do I look like a married man, sir? No, thank Heaven! My profession is to make widows, not wives.

*Beau.* You must have gained much booty in Italy. Pauline will be your heiress, eh?

*Dam.* Booty! Not I. Heiress to what? Two trunks and a portmanteau, four horses, three swords, two suits of regimentals, and six pair of white leather inexpressibles![1] A pretty fortune for a young lady!

*Beau.* [*aside*]. Then all is safe! [*Aloud.*] Ha! ha! Is that really all your capital, General Damas? Why, I thought Italy had been a second Mexico to you soldiers.

*Dam.* All a toss up, sir. I was not one of the lucky ones. My friend Morier, indeed, saved something handsome. But our Commander-in-Chief took care of him, and Morier is a thrifty, economical dog; not like the rest of us soldiers, who spend our money carelessly as if it were our blood.

*Beau.* Well, it is no matter. I do not want fortune with Pauline. And you must know, General Damas, that your fair cousin has at length consented to reward my long and ardent attachment.

*Dam.* You! The devil! Why, she is already married. There is no divorce!

*Beau.* True; but this very day she is formally to authorize the necessary proceeding—this very day she is to sign the contract that is to make her mine within one week from the day on which her present illegal marriage is annulled.

*Dam.* You tell me wonders! Wonders! No; I believe anything of women.

*Beau.* [*as he is going*]. I must wish you good morning.

*Enter* Deschappelles

*M. D.* Oh, Beauseant! Well met. Let us come to the notary at once.

*Dam.* [*to* Deschappelles]. Why, cousin?

*M. D.* Damas, welcome to Lyons. Pray call on us; my wife will be delighted to see you.

*Dam.* Your wife be——blessed for her condescension! But [*taking him aside.*] what do I hear? Is it possible that your daughter has consented to a divorce?—that she will marry Monsieur Beauseant?

*M. D.* Certainly! What have you to say against it? A gentleman of birth, fortune, character. We are not so proud as we were; even my wife has had enough of nobility and princes.

*Dam.* But Pauline loved that young man so tenderly.

*M. D.* [*taking snuff*]. That was two years and a half ago!

*Dam.* Very true. Poor Melnotte!

*M. D.* But do not talk of that impostor. I hope he is dead or has left the country. Nay, even were he in Lyons at this moment, he ought to rejoice that, in an honorable and suitable alliance, my daughter may forget her suffering and his crime.

*Dam.* Nay, if it be all settled I have no more to say. Monsieur Beauseant informs me that the contract is to be signed this very day.

*M. D.* It is; at one o'clock precisely. Will you be one of the witnesses?

*Dam.* I? No; that is to say—yes, certainly! At one o'clock I will wait on you.

*M. D.* Till then, adieu. Come, Beauseant.

[*Exeunt* Beauseant *and* Deschappelles

*Dam.* The man who sets his heart upon a woman
Is a chameleon, and doth feed on air[2];
From air he takes his colors, holds his life,—
Changes with every wind,—grows lean or fat;
Rosy with hope, or green with jealousy,
Or pallid with despair—just as the gale
Varies from north to south, from heat to cold!
Oh, woman! woman! thou shouldst have few sins

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[1] leather inexpressibles: breeches.

[2] is . . . air: cf. *Hamlet*, Act III, Sc. II, line 110, (page 216).

Of thine own to answer for! Thou art the author
Of such a book of follies in a man,
That it would need the tears of all the angels
To blot the record out!

*Enter* Melnotte, *pale and agitated*

I need not tell thee. Thou hast heard—
*Mel.* The worst!
I have!
*Dam.* Be cheered; others are as fair as she is.
*Mel.* Others! The world is crumbled at my feet.
She *was* my world; filled up the whole of being—
Smiled in the sunshine—walk'd the glorious earth—
Sate in my heart—was the sweet life of life.
The past was hers; I dreamt not of a Future
That did not wear her shape. Memory and Hope
Alike are gone. Pauline is faithless! Henceforth
The universal space is desolate!
*Dam.* Hope yet.
*Mel.* Hope! Yes, one hope is left me still—
A soldier's grave! Glory has died with Love!
I look into my heart, and where I saw
Pauline, see Death!
[*After a pause.*] But am I not deceived?
I went but by the rumor of the town.
Rumor is false,—I was too hasty! Damas,
Whom hast thou seen?
*Dam.* Thy rival and her father.
Arm thyself for the truth. He heeds not——
*Mel.* She
Will never know how deeply she was loved.
The charitable night, that wont to bring
Comfort to day, in bright and eloquent dreams,
Is henceforth leagued with misery. Sleep, farewell,
Or else become eternal! Oh, the waking
From false oblivion, and to see the sun,
And know she is another's!
*Dam.* Be a man.
*Mel.* I am man! It is the sting of woe
Like mine that tells us we are men.
*Dam.* The false one
Did not deserve thee.
*Mel.* Hush! No word against her.
Why should she keep, thro' years and silent absence,
The holy tablets of her virgin faith
True to a traitor's name? Oh, blame her not;
It were a sharper grief to think her worthless
Than to be what I am. To-day—to-day!
They said "to-day!" This day, so wildly welcomed—
This day my soul had singled out of time
And mark'd for bliss. This day! oh, could I see her—
See her once more unknown—but hear her voice,
So that one echo of its music might
Make ruin less appalling in its silence!
*Dam.* Easily done. Come with me to her house.
Your dress—your cloak—moustache—the bronzed hues
Of time and toil—the name you bear—belief
In your absence—all will ward away suspicion.
Keep in the shade. Ay, I would have you come.
There may be hope. Pauline is yet so young,
They may have forced her to these second bridals
Out of mistaken love.
*Mel.* No; bid me hope not.
Bid me not hope. I could not bear again
To fall from such a heaven. One gleam of sunshine,
And the ice breaks, and I am lost! Oh, Damas,
There's no such thing as courage in a man.
The veriest slave that ever crawl'd from danger

Might spurn me now. When first I lost her, Damas,
I bore it; did I not? I still had hope,
And now I—I—
*Bursts into an agony of grief.*
*Dam.* What, comrade! All the women
That ever smiled destruction on brave hearts
Were not worth tears like these.
*Mel.* 'Tis past—forget it.
I am prepared. Life has no farther ills.
The cloud has broken in that stormy rain,
And on the waste I stand, alone with Heaven!
*Dam.* His very face is changed! a breaking heart
Does its work soon! Come, Melnotte, rouse thyself;
One effort more. Again thou'lt see her.
*Mel.* See her!
There is a passion in that simple sentence
That shivers all the pride and power of reason
Into a chaos!
*Dam.* Time wanes; come, ere yet
It be too late.
*Mel.* Terrible words—"*Too late!*"
Lead on. One last look more, and then——
*Dam.* Forget her!
*Mel.* Forget her! Yes; for death remembers not. [*Exeunt*

## SCENE II

*A room in the house of* MONSIEUR DESCHAPPELLES; PAULINE *seated in great dejection.*

*Paul.* It is so, then. I must be false to Love,
Or sacrifice a father! Oh, my Claude,
My lover and my husband! have I lived
To pray that thou mayst find some fairer boon
Than the deep faith of this devoted heart,—
Nourished till now—now broken!

*Enter* MONSIEUR DESCHAPPELLES

*M. D.* My dear child,
How shall I thank—how bless thee? Thou hast saved—
I will not say my fortune—I could bear
Reverse, and shrink not; but that prouder wealth
Which merchants value most—my name, my credit—
The hard-won honors of a toilsome life—
These thou hast saved, my child!
*Paul.* Is there no hope?
No hope but this?
*M. D.* None. If, without the sum
Which Beauseant offers for thy hand, this day
Sinks to the west—to-morrow brings our ruin!
And hundreds, mingled in that ruin, curse
The bankrupt merchant! and the insolent herd
We feasted and made merry, cry in scorn
"How pride has fallen!—Lo, the bankrupt merchant!"
My daughter, thou hast saved us!
*Paul.* And am lost!
*M. D.* Come, let me hope that Beauseant's love——
*Paul.* His love!
Talk not of love. Love has no thought of self!
Love buys not with the ruthless usurer's gold
The loathsome prostitution of a hand
Without a heart! Love sacrifices all things,
To bless the thing it loves! *He* knows not love.
Father, his love is hate—his hope revenge!
My tears, my anguish, my remorse for falsehood—
These are the joys he wrings from our despair!
*M. D.* If thou deem'st thus, reject him! Shame and ruin
Were better than thy misery;—think no more on't.
My sand is well-nigh run; what boots it when
The glass is broken? We'll annul the contract;
And if to-morrow in the prisoner's cell

These agéd limbs are laid, why, still, my child,
I'll think thou art spared, and wait the Liberal Hour
That lays the beggar by the side of kings!
*Paul.* No—no—forgive me! You, my honor'd father,—
You, who so loved, so cherish'd me, whose lips
Never knew one harsh word! I'm not ungrateful:
I am but human! Hush! *Now*, call the bridegroom.
You see I am prepared—no tears—all calm;
But, father, *talk no more of love!*
*M. D.* My child,
'Tis but one struggle; he is young, rich, noble;
Thy state will rank first 'mid the dames of Lyons;
And when this heart can shelter thee no more,
Thy youth will not be guardianless.
*Paul.* I have set
My foot upon the ploughshare—I will pass
The fiery ordeal. [*Aside.*] Merciful Heaven support me!
And on the absent wanderer shed the light
Of happier stars—lost ever more to me!

*Enter* Madame Deschappelles, Beauseant, Glavis *and* Notary

*Mme. D.* Why, Pauline, you are quite in *deshabille.* You ought to be more alive to the importance of this joyful occasion. We had once looked higher, it is true; but you see, after all, Monsieur Beauseant's father *was* a Marquis, and that's a great comfort! Pedigree and jointure!—you have them both in Monsieur Beauseant. A young lady decorously brought up should only have two considerations in her choice of a husband: first, is his birth honorable,—secondly, will his death be advantageous? All other trifling details should be left to parental anxiety.

*Beau.* [*approaching, and waving aside* Madame]. Ah, Pauline, let me hope that you are reconciled to an event which confers such rapture upon me.

*Paul.* I am reconciled to my doom.

*Beau.* Doom is a harsh word, sweet lady.

*Paul.* [*aside*]. This man must have some mercy; his heart cannot be marble. [*Aloud.*] Oh, sir, be just—be generous! Seize a noble triumph—a great revenge. Save the father, and spare the child.

*Beau.* [*aside*]. Joy—joy alike to my hatred and my passion! The haughty Pauline is at last my suppliant. [*Aloud*]. You ask from me what I have not the sublime virtue to grant—a virtue reserved only for the gardener's son! I cannot forego my hopes in the moment of their fulfillment. I adhere to the contract—your father's ruin, or your hand.

*Paul.* Then all is over. Sir, I have decided.

*The clock strikes one.*

*Enter* Damas *and* Melnotte

*Dam.* Your servant, cousin Deschappelles. Let me introduce Colonel Morier.

*Mme. D.* [*curtseying very low*]. What, the celebrated hero? This is, indeed, an honor.

Melnotte *bows and remains in the background.*

*Dam.* [*to* Pauline]. My little cousin, I congratulate you! What, no smile—no blush? You are going to be divorced from poor Melnotte, and marry this rich gentleman. You ought to be excessively happy.

*Paul.* Happy!

*Dam.* Why, how pale you are, child! Poor Pauline! Hist—confide in me. Do they force you to this?

*Paul.* No!

*Dam.* You act with your own free consent?

*Paul.* My own consent—yes.

*Dam.* Then you are the most—I will not say what you are.

*Paul.* You think ill of me—be it so; yet if you knew all——

*Dam.* There is some mystery—speak out, Pauline.

*Paul.* [*suddenly*]. Oh! perhaps you can save me! you are our relation—our friend! My father is on the verge of bankruptcy; this day he requires a large sum to meet demands that cannot be denied; that sum Beauseant will advance—this hand the condition of the barter. Save me if you have the means—save me! You will be repaid above!

*Dam.* [*aside*] I recant. Women are not so bad, after all! [*Aloud.*] Humph, child! I cannot help you—I am too poor!

*Paul.* The last plank to which I clung is shivered!

*Dam.* Hold—you see my friend Morier; Melnotte is his most intimate friend—fought in the same fields—slept in the same tent. Have you any message to send to Melnotte?—any word to soften this blow?

*Paul.* He knows Melnotte—he will see him—he will bear to him my last farewell—[*Approaches* MELNOTTE.]—He has a stern air—he turns away from me—he despises me! Sir, one word, I beseech you.

*Mel.* Her voice again! How the old time comes o'er me!

*Dam.* [*to* MADAME]. Don't interrupt him. He is going to tell her what a rascal young Melnotte is. He knows him well, I promise you.

*Mme. D.* So considerate in you, cousin Damas.

DAMAS *approaches* DESCHAPPELLES; *converses apart with him in dumb show.* DESCHAPPELLES *shows him a paper, which he inspects and takes.*

*Paul.* Thrice have I sought to speak; my courage fails me.
Sir, is it true that you have known—nay, are you
The friend of—Melnotte?
*Mel.* Lady, yes. Myself
And Misery know the man.
*Paul.* And you will see him,
And you will bear to him—ay, word for word—
All that this heart, which breaks in parting from him,
Would send, ere still forever.
*Mel.* He hath told me
You have a right to choose from out the world
A worthier bridegroom. He foregoes all claim
Even to murmur at his doom. Speak on.
*Paul.* Tell him, for years I never nursed a thought
That was not his; that on his wandering way,
Daily and nightly, poured a mourner's prayers.
Tell him ev'n now that I would rather share
His lowliest lot, walk by his side an outcast,
Work for him, beg with him, live upon the light
Of one kind smile from him, than wear the crown
The Bourbon lost!
*Mel.* [*aside*]. Am I already mad?
And does delirium utter such sweet words
Into a dreamer's ear? [*Aloud.*] You love him thus,
And yet desert him?
*Paul.* Say, that if his eye
Could read this heart—its struggles, its temptations—
His love itself would pardon that desertion.
Look on that poor old man. He is my father.
He stands upon the verge of an abyss;
He calls his child to save him. Shall I shrink
From him who gave me birth? Withhold my hand,
And see a parent perish? Tell him this,
And say—that we shall meet again in Heaven!
*Mel.* [*aside*]. The night is past; joy cometh with the morrow.
[*Aloud.*] Lady, I—I—what is this riddle; what
The nature of this sacrifice?
*Paul.* [*pointing to* DAMAS]. Go, ask him.
*Beau.* [*from the table*]. The papers are prepared; we only need
Your hand and seal.
*Mel.* Stay, lady; one word more.

Were but your duty with your faith united,
Would you still share the low-born peasant's lot?
*Paul.* Would I? Ah, better death with him I love
Than all the pomp—which is but as the flowers
That crown the victim! [*Turning away.*] I am ready.

MELNOTTE *rushes to* DAMAS.

*Dam.* There—
This is the schedule—this the total.
*Beau.* [*to* DESCHAPPELLES, *showing notes*]. These
Are yours the instant she has signed; you are
Still the great House of Lyons!

*The Notary is about to hand the Contract to* PAULINE, *when* MELNOTTE *seizes and tears it.*

*Beau.* Are you mad!
*M. D.* How, sir! What means this insult!
*Mel.* Peace, old man!
I have a prior claim. Before the face
Of man and Heaven I urge it! I outbid
Yon sordid huckster for your priceless jewel.
[*Giving a pocket-book.*]
There is the sum twice-told! Blush not to take it.
There's not a coin that is not bought and hallow'd
In the cause of nations with a soldier's blood!
*Beau.* Torments and death!
*Paul.* That voice! Thou art——
*Mel.* Thy husband!

PAULINE *rushes into his arms.*

*Mel.* Look up! Look up, Pauline!—for I can bear
Thine eyes! The stain is blotted from my name.
I have redeemed mine honor. I can call
On France to sanction thy divine forgiveness!
Oh, joy! Oh, rapture! By the midnight watchfires
Thus have I seen thee—thus foretold this hour!
And 'midst the roar of battle, thus have heard
The beating of thy heart against my own!
*Beau.* Fool'd, duped, and triumph'd over in the hour
Of mine own victory! Curses on ye both!
May thorns be planted in the marriage bed!
And love grow sour'd and blacken into hate,
Such as the hate that gnaws me!
*Dam.* Curse away!
And let me tell thee, Beauseant, a wise proverb
The Arabs have,—"Curses are like young chickens, [*Solemnly.*]
And still come home to roost!"
*Beau.* Their happiness
Maddens my soul! I am powerless and revengeless.
[*To* MADAME.] I wish you joy! Ha ha! the gardener's son! [*Exit*
*Dam.* [*to* GLAVIS]. Your friend intends to hang himself
Methinks you ought to be his traveling companion.
*Glav.* Sir, you are exceedingly obliging. [*Exit*
*Paul.* Oh!
My father, you are saved,—and by my husband!
Ah! blessed hour!
*Mel.* Yet you weep still, Pauline!
*Paul.* But on thy breast! *These* tears are sweet and holy!
*M. D.* You have won love and honor, nobly, Sir!
Take her;—be happy both!
*Mme. D.* I'm all astonish'd
Who, then, is Colonel Morier?
*Dam.* You behold him!
*Mel.* Morier no more after this happy day!
I would not bear again my father's name
'Till I could deem it spotless! The hour's come!
Heaven smiled on Conscience! As the soldier rose
From rank to rank, how sacred was the fame
That cancel'd crime, and raised him nearer thee!

*Mme. D.* A colonel and a hero! Well, that is something!
He's wondrously improved! I wish you joy, Sir!
*Mel.* Ah! the same love that tempts us into sin,
If it be true love, works out its redemption!
And he who seeks repentance for the Past
Should woo the Angel Virtue in the future!
*The Curtain falls.*

## NORWAY

### IBSEN

It is to a Scandinavian that contemporary drama owes its greatest debt. **Henrik Ibsen** (1828–1906), a Norwegian by birth, began his career as playwright at the age of twenty-two, and until within five years of his death produced plays at regular two-year intervals, twenty-seven in all. Ibsen, like others of the great dramatists, was experienced in the practical side of the theatre; for he was stage manager of the Norwegian theatre at Christiania up to 1864, when, after disappointments and reverses, he left his native land. For twenty-seven years he lived abroad in Italy and in Germany. Even though he was voted the national poet's pension in 1866, he would not return to Norway until 1891.

Ibsen's earlier plays were historical legends of Norway such as *The Vikings at Helgeland*, or poetical and satirical allegories like *Brand* and *Peer Gynt*. But it is his later plays, the prose social dramas, that, translated into many different languages, have had a remarkable influence on modern drama, and may be said to have effected a revolution in dramatic taste as well as in dramatic technique in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Ibsen's last plays are pervaded by mysticism.

His social dramas present some problem vital to contemporary life. They are analyses of character in everyday life under stress of social institutions and conventions. So explicit is Ibsen's dramatization of the facts, so insistent is he on the right of the individual to withstand the code of the majority, that he has been accused of being both cynical and immoral; and his plays have caused world-wide discussion.

Some of Ibsen's best known plays are: *Brand* (1866); *Peer Gynt* (1867); *Pillars of Society* (1877); *A Doll's House* (1879); *Ghosts* (1881); *An Enemy of the People* (1882); *The Wild Duck* (1884); *Rosmersholm* (1886); *The Lady from the Sea* (1888); *Hedda Gabler* (1890); *The Master Builder* (1892); *Little Eyolf* (1894); *John Gabriel Borkman* (1896); *When We Dead Awaken* (1900).

Due to Ibsen's influence a change became apparent in dramatic technique at the end of the Victorian Age. Everything that tended to detract from the impression of realism was discarded. Dialogue reproduced the colloquial speech of ordinary individuals. Theatric devices were no longer tolerated. The dramatic action was concentrated upon crises in human lives. This focused the plot on the logical effects upon individuals, or events that had often transpired long before the opening of the play itself.[1]

For many years dramatists have been enthusiastic followers in Ibsen's footsteps; but now in this third decade of the twentieth century, there seems to be emerging out of the bewildering variety of experiments, a world-wide reaction against the stark realism and the accepted technique of Ibsen. Both playwrights and producers are attempting to give expression in the theatre to the symbolic and idealistic, and even to the mystical, such as Ibsen himself revealed in his allegorical dramas.

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[1] See Introduction, page 3.

# AN ENEMY OF THE PEOPLE

(En Folkefiende)

*A Play in Five Acts*

HENRIK IBSEN

*1882*

*Performed at Christiania Theatre on January 13, 1883*

### DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

DR. THOMAS STOCKMANN, *Medical Officer of the Municipal Baths*
MRS. STOCKMANN, *his wife*
PETRA, *their daughter, a teacher*
EJLIF }
MORTEN } *their sons (aged 13 and 10 respectively)*
PETER STOCKMANN, *the* Doctor's *elder brother; Mayor of the Town and Chief Constable, Chairman of the Baths' Committee, etc., etc.*
MORTON KIIL, *a tanner* (Mrs. Stockmann's *adopted father)*
HOVSTAD, *editor of the* People's Messenger
BILLING, *sub-editor*
CAPTAIN HORSTER[1]
ASLAKSEN, *a printer*

Men *of various conditions and occupations, some few* women, *and a troop of* schoolboys*—the audience at a public meeting*

*The action takes place in a coast town in southern Norway.*

## ACT I

DR. STOCKMANN'S *sitting-room. It is evening. The room is plainly but neatly appointed and furnished. In the right-hand wall are two doors; the farther leads out to the hall, the nearer to the doctor's study. In the left-hand wall, opposite the door leading to the hall, is a door leading to the other rooms occupied by the family. In the middle of the same wall stands the stove, and, further forward, a couch with a looking-glass hanging over it and an oval table in front of it. On the table, a lighted lamp, with a lampshade. At the back of the room, an open door leads to the dining-room.* BILLING *is seen sitting at the dining table, on which a lamp is burning. He has a napkin tucked under his chin, and* MRS. STOCKMANN *is standing by the table handing him a large plateful of roast beef. The other places at the table are empty, and the table somewhat in disorder, a meal having evidently recently been finished.*

*Mrs. Stockmann.* You see, if you come an hour late, Mr. Billing, you have to put up with cold meat.

*Billing* [*as he eats*]. It is uncommonly good, thank you—remarkably good.

*Mrs. Stock.* My husband makes such a point of having his meals punctually, you know—

*Bill.* That doesn't affect me a bit. Indeed, I almost think I enjoy a meal all the better when I can sit down and eat all by myself and undisturbed.

*Mrs. Stock.* Oh well, as long as you are enjoying it—. [*Turns to the hall door, listening.*] I expect that is Mr. Hovstad coming too.

*Bill.* Very likely.

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[1] Ibsen wanted this character to be played as a young man.

Peter Stockmann *comes in. He wears an overcoat and his official hat, and carries a stick.*

*Peter Stockmann.* Good evening, Katherine.

*Mrs. Stock.* [*coming forward into the sitting-room*]. Ah, good evening—is it you? How good of you to come up and see us!

*Peter.* I happened to be passing, and so—[*Looks into the dining-room*]. But you have company with you, I see.

*Mrs. Stock.* [*a little embarrassed*]. Oh, no—it was quite by chance he came in. [*Hurriedly.*] Won't you come in and have something, too?

*Peter.* I! No, thank you. Good gracious—hot meat at night! Not with my digestion.

*Mrs. Stock.* Oh, but just once in a while—

*Peter.* No, no, my dear lady; I stick to my tea and bread and butter. It is much more wholesome in the long run—and a little more economical, too.

*Mrs. Stock.* [*smiling*]. Now you mustn't think that Thomas and I are spendthrifts.

*Peter.* Not you, my dear; I would never think that of you. [*Points to the* Doctor's *study.*] Is he not at home?

*Mrs. Stock.* No, he went out for a little turn after supper—he and the boys.

*Peter.* I doubt if that is a wise thing to do. [*Listens.*] I fancy I hear him coming now.

*Mrs. Stock.* No, I don't think it is he. [*A knock is heard at the door.*] Come in! [Hovstad *comes in from the hall.*] Oh, it is you, Mr. Hovstad!

*Hovstad.* Yes, I hope you will forgive me, but I was delayed at the printer's. Good evening, Mr. Mayor.

*Peter* [*bowing a little distantly*]. Good evening. You have come on business, no doubt.

*Hov.* Partly. It's about an article for the paper.

*Peter.* So I imagined. I hear my brother has become a prolific contributor to the *People's Messenger.*

*Hov.* Yes, he is good enough to write in the *People's Messenger* when he has any home truths to tell.

*Mrs. Stock.* [*to* Hovstad]. But won't you—? [*Points to the dining-room.*]

*Peter.* Quite so, quite so. I don't blame him in the least, as a writer, for addressing himself to the quarters where he will find the readiest sympathy. And, besides that, I personally have no reason to bear any ill will to your paper, Mr. Hovstad.

*Hov.* I quite agree with you.

*Peter.* Taking one thing with another, there is an excellent spirit of toleration in the town—an admirable municipal spirit. And it all springs from the fact of our having a great common interest to unite us—an interest that is in an equally high degree the concern of every right-minded citizen—

*Hov.* The Baths, yes.

*Peter.* Exactly—our fine, new, handsome Baths. Mark my words, Mr. Hovstad—the Baths will become the focus of our municipal life! Not a doubt of it!

*Mrs. Stock.* That is just what Thomas says.

*Peter.* Think how extraordinarily the place has developed within the last year or two! Money has been flowing in, and there is some life and some business doing in the town. Houses and landed property are rising in value every day.

*Hov.* And unemployment is diminishing.

*Peter.* Yes, that is another thing. The burden of the poor rates has been lightened, to the great relief of the propertied classes; and that relief will be even greater if only we get a really good summer this year, and lots of visitors—plenty of invalids, who will make the Baths talked about.

*Hov.* And there is a good prospect of that, I hear.

*Peter.* It looks very promising. Enquiries about apartments and that sort of thing are reaching us every day.

*Hov.* Well, the doctor's article will come in very suitably.

*Peter.* Has he been writing something just lately?

*Hov.* This is something he wrote in the winter; a recommendation of the Baths—an account of the excellent sanitary conditions here. But I held the article over, temporarily.

*Peter.* Ah,—some little difficulty about it, I suppose?

*Hov.* No, not at all; I thought it would be better to wait till the spring, because it is just at this time that people begin to think seriously about their summer quarters.

*Peter.* Quite right; you were perfectly right, Mr. Hovstad.

*Hov.* Yes, Thomas is really indefatigable when it is a question of the Baths.

*Peter.* Well—remember, he is the Medical Officer to the Baths.

*Hov.* Yes, and what is more, they owe their existence to him.

*Peter.* To him? Indeed! It is true I have heard from time to time that some people are of that opinion. At the same time I must say I imagined that I took a modest part in the enterprise.

*Mrs. Stock.* Yes, that is what Thomas is always saying.

*Hov.* But who denies it, Mr. Stockmann? You set the thing going and made a practical concern of it; we all know that. I only meant that the idea of it came first from the doctor.

*Peter.* Oh, ideas—yes! My brother has had plenty of them in his time—unfortunately. But when it is a question of putting an idea into practical shape, you have to apply to a man of different mettle, Mr. Hovstad. And I certainly should have thought that in this house at least—

*Mrs. Stock.* My dear Peter—

*Hov.* How can you think that—?

*Mrs. Stock.* Won't you go in and have something, Mr. Hovstad? My husband is sure to be back directly.

*Hov.* Thank you, perhaps just a morsel. [*Goes into the dining-room*

*Peter* [*lowering his voice a little*]. It is a curious thing that these farmers' sons never seem to lose their want of tact.

*Mrs. Stock.* Surely it is not worth bothering about! Cannot you and Thomas share the credit as brothers?

*Peter.* I should have thought so; but apparently some people are not satisfied with a share.

*Mrs. Stock.* What nonsense! You and Thomas get on so capitally together. [*Listens.*] There he is at last, I think.

*Goes out and opens the door leading to the hall.*

*Dr. Stockmann.* [*laughing and talking outside*]. Look here—here is another guest for you, Katherine. Isn't that jolly! Come in, Captain Horster; hang your coat up on this peg. Ah, you don't wear an overcoat. Just think, Katherine; I met him in the street and could hardly persuade him to come up!

CAPTAIN HORSTER *comes into the room and greets* MRS. STOCKMANN. *He is followed by* DR. STOCKMANN.

*Dr. Stock.* Come along in, boys. They are ravenously hungry again, you know. Come along, Captain Horster; you must have a slice of beef.

[*Pushes* HORSTER *into the dining-room.* EJLIF *and* MORTEN *go in after them*

*Mrs. Stock.* But, Thomas, don't you see—?

*Dr. Stock.* [*turning in the doorway*]. Oh, is it you, Peter? [*Shakes hands with him.*] Now that is very delightful.

*Peter.* Unfortunately I must go in a moment—

*Dr. Stock.* Rubbish! There is some toddy just coming in. You haven't forgotten the toddy, Katherine?

*Mrs. Stock.* Of course not; the water is boiling now. [*Goes into the dining-room*

*Peter.* Toddy, too!

*Dr. Stock.* Yes, sit down and we will have it comfortably.

*Peter.* Thanks, I never care about an evening's drinking.

*Dr. Stock.* But this isn't an evening's drinking.

*Peter.* It seems to me—. [*Looks towards the dining-room.*] It is extraordinary how they can put away all that food.

*Dr. Stock.* [*rubbing his hands*]. Yes, isn't it splendid to see young people eat? They have always got an appetite, you know! That's as it should be. Lots of food—to build up their strength! They are the people who are going to stir up the fermenting forces of the future, Peter.

*Peter.* May I ask what they will find here to "stir up," as you put it?

*Dr. Stock.* Ah, you must ask the young people that—when the time comes. We shan't be able to see it, of course. That stands to reason—two old fogies, like us—

*Peter.* Really, really! I must say that is an extremely odd expression to—

*Dr. Stock.* Oh, you mustn't take me too literally, Peter. I am so heartily happy and contented, you know. I think it is such an extraordinary piece of good fortune to be in the middle of all this growing, germinating life. It is a splendid time to live in! It is as if a whole new world were being created around one.

*Peter.* Do you really think so?

*Dr. Stock.* Ah, naturally you can't appreciate it as keenly as I. You have lived all your life in these surroundings, and your impressions have got blunted. But I, who have been buried all these years in my little corner up north, almost without ever seeing a stranger who might bring new ideas with him—well, in my case it has just the same effect as if I had been transported into the middle of a crowded city.

*Peter.* Oh, a city—!

*Dr. Stock.* I know, I know; it is all cramped enough here, compared with many other places. But there is life here—there is promise—there are innumerable things to work for and fight for; and that is the main thing. [*Calls.*] Katherine, hasn't the postman been here?

*Mrs. Stock.* [*from the dining-room*]. No.

*Dr. Stock.* And then to be comfortably off, Peter! That is something one learns to value, when one has been on the brink of starvation, as we have.

*Peter.* Oh, surely—

*Dr. Stock.* Indeed I can assure you we have often been very hard put to it, up there. And now to be able to live like a lord! To-day, for instance, we had roast beef for dinner—and, what is more, for supper too. Won't you come and have a little bit? Or let me show it you, at any rate? Come here—

*Peter.* No, no—not for worlds!

*Dr. Stock.* Well, but just come here then. Do you see, we have got a table-cover?

*Peter.* Yes, I noticed it.

*Dr. Stock.* And we have got a lamp-shade too. Do you see? All out of Katherine's savings! It makes the room so cosy. Don't you think so? Just stand here for a moment—no, no, not there—just here, that's it! Look now, when you get the light on it altogether—I really think it looks very nice, doesn't it?

*Peter.* Oh, if you can afford luxuries of this kind—

*Dr. Stock.* Yes, I can afford it now. Katherine tells me I earn almost as much as we spend.

*Peter.* Almost—yes!

*Dr. Stock.* But a scientific man must live in a little bit of style. I am quite sure an ordinary civil servant spends more in a year than I do.

*Peter.* I daresay. A civil servant—a man in a well-paid position—

*Dr. Stock.* Well, any ordinary merchant, then! A man in that position spends two or three times as much as—

*Peter.* It just depends on circumstances.

*Dr. Stock.* At all events I assure you I don't waste money unprofitably. But I can't find it in my heart to deny myself the pleasure of entertaining my friends. I need that sort of thing, you know. I have lived for so long shut out of it all, that it is a necessity of life to me to mix with young, eager, ambitious men, men of liberal and active minds; and that describes every one of those fellows who are enjoying their supper in there. I wish you knew more of Hovstad—

*Peter.* By the way, Hovstad was telling me he was going to print another article of yours.

*Dr. Stock.* An article of mine?

*Peter.* Yes, about the Baths. An article you wrote in the winter.

*Dr. Stock.* Oh, that one! No, I don't intend that to appear just for the present.

*Peter.* Why not? It seems to me that this would be the most opportune moment.

*Dr. Stock.* Yes, very likely—under normal conditions. [*Crosses the room.*]

*Peter* [*following him with his eyes*]. Is there anything abnormal about the present conditions?

*Dr. Stock.* [*standing still*]. To tell you the truth, Peter, I can't say just at this moment—at all events not to-night. There may be much that is very abnormal about the present conditions—and it is possible there may be nothing abnormal about them at all. It is quite possible it may be merely my imagination.

*Peter.* I must say it all sounds most mysterious. Is there something going on that I am to be kept in ignorance of? I should have imagined that I, as Chairman of the governing body of the Baths—

*Dr. Stock.* And I should have imagined that I—. Oh, come, don't let us fly out at one another, Peter.

*Peter.* Heaven forbid! I am not in the habit of flying out at people, as you call it. But I am entitled to request most emphatically that all arrangements shall be made in a business-like manner, through the proper channels, and shall be dealt with by the legally constituted authorities. I can allow no going behind our backs by any roundabout means.

*Dr. Stock.* Have I ever at any time tried to go behind your backs!

*Peter.* You have an ingrained tendency to take your own way, at all events; and that is almost equally inadmissible in a well ordered community. The individual ought undoubtedly to acquiesce in subordinating himself to the community—or, to speak more accurately, to the authorities who have the care of the community's welfare.

*Dr. Stock.* Very likely. But what the deuce has all this got to do with me?

*Peter.* That is exactly what you never appear to be willing to learn, my dear Thomas. But, mark my words, some day you will have to suffer for it—sooner or later. Now I have told you. Good-bye.

*Dr. Stock.* Have you taken leave of your senses? You are on the wrong scent altogether.

*Peter.* I am not usually that. You must excuse me now if I—[*Calls into the dining-room*]. Good night, Katherine. Good night, gentlemen.

[*Goes out*

*Mrs. Stock.* [*coming from the dining-room*]. Has he gone?

*Dr. Stock.* Yes, and in such a bad temper.

*Mrs. Stock.* But, dear Thomas, what have you been doing to him again?

*Dr. Stock.* Nothing at all. And, anyhow, he can't oblige me to make my report before the proper time.

*Mrs. Stock.* What have you got to make a report to him about?

*Dr. Stock.* Hm! Leave that to me, Katherine.—It is an extraordinary thing that the postman doesn't come.

HOVSTAD, BILLING *and* HORSTER *have got up from the table and come into the sitting-room.* EJLIF *and* MORTEN *come in after them*

*Bill.* [*stretching himself*]. Ah!—one feels a new man after a meal like that.

*Hov.* The mayor wasn't in a very sweet temper to-night, then.

*Dr. Stock.* It is his stomach; he has a wretched digestion.

*Hov.* I rather think it was us two of the *People's Messenger* that he couldn't digest.

*Mrs. Stock.* I thought you came out of it pretty well with him.

*Hov.* Oh yes; but it isn't anything more than a sort of truce.

*Bill.* That is just what it is! That word sums up the situation.

*Dr. Stock.* We must remember that Peter is a lonely man, poor chap. He has no home comforts of any kind; nothing but everlasting business. And all that infernal weak tea wash that he pours into himself! Now then, my boys, bring chairs up to the table. Aren't we going to have that toddy, Katherine?

*Mrs. Stock.* [*going into the dining-room*]. I am just getting it.

*Dr. Stock.* Sit down here on the couch beside me, Captain Horster. We so seldom see you—. Please sit down, my friends.

*They sit down at the table.* MRS. STOCKMANN *brings a tray, with a spirit-lamp, glasses, bottles, etc., upon it.*

*Mrs. Stock.* There you are! This is arrack,[1] and this is rum, and this one is the brandy. Now every one must help themselves.

*Dr. Stock.* [*taking a glass*]. We will. [*They all mix themselves some toddy.*] And let us have the cigars. Ejlif, you know where the box is. And you, Morten, can fetch my pipe. [*The two boys go into the room on the right.*] I have a suspicion that Ejlif pockets a cigar now and then! —but I take no notice of it. [*Calls out.*] And my smoking-cap, too, Morten. Katherine, you can tell him where I left it. Ah, he has got it. [*The boys bring the various things.*] Now, my friends. I stick to my pipe, you know. This one has seen plenty of bad weather with me up north. [*Touches glasses with them.*] Your good health! Ah, it is good to be sitting snug and warm here.

*Mrs. Stock.* [*who sits knitting*]. Do you sail soon, Captain Horster?

*Horster.* I expect to be ready to sail next week.

*Mrs. Stock.* I suppose you are going to America?

*Hor.* Yes, that is the plan.

*Mrs. Stock.* Then you won't be able to take part in the coming election.

*Hor.* Is there going to be an election?

*Bill.* Didn't you know?

*Hor.* No, I don't mix myself up with those things.

*Bill.* But do you not take an interest in public affairs?

*Hor.* No, I don't know anything about politics.

*Bill.* All the same, one ought to vote, at any rate.

*Hor.* Even if one doesn't know anything about what is going on?

*Bill.* Doesn't know! What do you mean by that? A community is like a ship; every one ought to be prepared to take the helm.

*Hor.* May be that is all very well on shore; but on board ship it wouldn't work.

*Hov.* It is astonishing how little most sailors care about what goes on on shore.

*Bill.* Very extraordinary.

*Dr. Stock.* Sailors are like birds of passage; they feel equally at home in any latitude. And that is only an additional reason for our being all the more keen, Hovstad. Is there to be anything of public interest in tomorrow's *Messenger?*

*Hov.* Nothing about municipal affairs. But the day after to-morrow I was thinking of printing your article—

*Dr. Stock.* Ah, devil take it—my article! Look here, that must wait a bit.

*Hov.* Really? We had just got convenient space for it, and I thought it was just the opportune moment—

*Dr. Stock.* Yes, yes, very likely you are right; but it must wait all the same. I will explain to you later.

PETRA *comes in from the hall, in hat and cloak and with a bundle of exercise books under her arm*

*Petra.* Good evening.

*Dr. Stock.* Good evening, Petra; come along.

*Mutual greetings;* PETRA *takes off her things and puts them down on a chair by the door.*

*Petra.* And you have all been sitting here enjoying yourselves, while I have been out slaving!

*Dr. Stock.* Well, come and enjoy yourself too!

*Bill.* May I mix a glass for you?

*Petra* [*coming to the table*]. Thanks, I would rather do it; you always mix it too strong. But I forgot, father—I have a letter for you. [*Goes to the chair where she has laid her things.*]

*Dr. Stock.* A letter? From whom?

*Petra* [*looking in her coat pocket*]. The postman gave it to me just as I was going out—

*Dr. Stock.* [*getting up and going to her*]. And you only give it to me now!

*Petra.* I really had not time to run up again. There it is!

*Dr. Stock.* [*seizing the letter*]. Let's see, let's see, child! [*Looks at the address.*] Yes, that's all right!

*Mrs. Stock.* Is it the one you have been expecting so anxiously, Thomas?

*Dr. Stock.* Yes, it is. I must go to my room now and—. Where shall I get a light, Katherine? Is there no lamp in my room again?

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[1] arrack: an Oriental liquor, made, usually, of the sap of palms.

*Mrs. Stock.* Yes, your lamp is all ready lit on your desk.

*Dr. Stock.* Good, good. Excuse me for a moment—. [*Goes into his study*

*Petra.* What do you suppose it is, mother?

*Mrs. Stock.* I don't know; for the last day or two he has always been asking if the postman has not been here.

*Bill.* Probably some country patient.

*Petra.* Poor old dad!—he will overwork himself soon. [*Mixes a glass for herself.*] There, that will taste good!

*Hov.* Have you been teaching in the evening school again to-day?

*Petra* [*sipping from her glass*]. Two hours.

*Bill.* And four hours of school in the morning—

*Petra.* Five hours.

*Mrs. Stock.* And you have still got exercises to correct, I see.

*Petra.* A whole heap, yes.

*Hor.* You are pretty full up with work too, it seems to me.

*Petra.* Yes—but that is good. One is so delightfully tired after it.

*Bill.* Do you like that?

*Petra.* Yes, because one sleeps so well then.

*Morten.* You must be dreadfully wicked, Petra.

*Petra.* Wicked?

*Mort.* Yes, because you work so much. Mr. Rörlund says work is a punishment for our sins.

*Ejlif.* Pooh, what a duffer you are, to believe a thing like that!

*Mrs. Stock.* Come, come, Ejlif!

*Bill.* [*laughing*]. That's capital!

*Hov.* Don't you want to work as hard as that, Morten?

*Mort.* No, indeed I don't.

*Hov.* What do you want to be, then?

*Mort.* I should like best to be a Viking.

*Ejlif.* You would have to be a pagan then.

*Mort.* Well, I could become a pagan, couldn't I?

*Bill.* I agree with you, Morten! My sentiments, exactly.

*Mrs. Stock.* [*signalling to him*]. I am sure that is not true, Mr. Billing.

*Bill.* Yes, I swear it is! I am a pagan, and I am proud of it. Believe me, before long we shall all be pagans.

*Mort.* And then shall be allowed to do anything we like?

*Bill.* Well, you see, Morten—.

*Mrs. Stock.* You must go to your room now boys; I am sure you have some lessons to learn for to-morrow.

*Ejlif.* I should like so much to stay a little longer—

*Mrs. Stock.* No, no; away you go, both of you.

[*The boys say good night and go into the room on the left*

*Hov.* Do you really think it can do the boys any harm to hear such things?

*Mrs. Stock.* I don't know; but I don't like it.

*Petra.* But you know, mother, I think you really are wrong about it.

*Mrs. Stock.* Maybe, but I don't like it—not in our own home.

*Petra.* There is so much falsehood both at home and at school. At home one must not speak, and at school we have to stand and tell lies to the children.

*Hor.* Tell lies?

*Petra.* Yes, don't you suppose we have to teach them all sorts of things that we don't believe?

*Bill.* That is perfectly true.

*Petra.* If only I had the means I would start a school of my own, and it would be conducted on very different lines.

*Bill.* Oh, bother the means—!

*Hor.* Well if you are thinking of that, Miss Stockmann, I shall be delighted to provide you with a schoolroom. The great big old house my father left me is standing almost empty; there is an immense dining-room downstairs—

*Petra* [*laughing*]. Thank you very much; but I am afraid nothing will come of it.

*Hov.* No, Miss Petra is much more likely to take to journalism, I expect. By the way, have you had time to do anything with that English story you promised to translate for us?

*Petra.* No, not yet; but you shall have it in good time.

DR. STOCKMANN *comes in from his room with an open letter in his hand*

*Dr. Stock.* [*waving the letter*]. Well, now the town will have something new to talk about, I can tell you!

*Bill.* Something new?

*Mrs. Stock.* What is this?

*Dr. Stock.* A great discovery, Katherine.

*Hov.* Really?

*Mrs. Stock.* A discovery of yours?

*Dr. Stock.* A discovery of mine. [*Walks up and down.*] Just let them come saying, as usual, that it is all fancy and a crazy man's imagination! But they will be careful what they say this time, I can tell you!

*Petra.* But, father, tell us what it is.

*Dr. Stock.* Yes, yes—only give me time, and you shall know all about it. If only I had Peter here now! It just shows how we men can go about forming our judgments, when in reality we are as blind as any moles—

*Hov.* What are you driving at, Doctor?

*Dr. Stock.* [*standing still by the table*]. Isn't it the universal opinion that our town is a healthy spot?

*Hov.* Certainly.

*Dr. Stock.* Quite an unusually healthy spot, in fact—a place that deserves to be recommended in the warmest possible manner either for invalids or for people who are well—

*Mrs. Stock.* Yes, but my dear Thomas—

*Dr. Stock.* And we have been recommending it and praising it—I have written and written, both in the *Messenger* and in pamphlets—

*Hov.* Well, what then?

*Dr. Stock.* And the Baths—we have called them the "main artery of the town's life-blood," the "nerve-centre of our town," and the devil knows what else—

*Bill.* "The town's pulsating heart" was the expression I once used on an important occasion—

*Dr. Stock.* Quite so. Well, do you know what they really are, these great, splendid, much praised Baths, that have cost so much money—do you know what they are?

*Hov.* No, what are they?

*Mrs. Stock.* Yes, what are they?

*Dr. Stock.* The whole place is a pest-house!

*Petra.* The Baths, father?

*Mrs. Stock.* [*at the same time*]. Our Baths!

*Hov.* But, Doctor—

*Bill.* Absolutely incredible!

*Dr. Stock.* The whole Bath establishment is a whited, poisoned sepulchre, I tell you—the gravest possible danger to the public health! All the nastiness up at Mölledal, all that stinking filth, is infecting the water in the conduit-pipes leading to the reservoir; and the same cursed, filthy poison oozes out on the shore, too—

*Hov.* Where the bathing-place is?

*Dr. Stock.* Just there.

*Hov.* How do you come to be so certain of all this, Doctor?

*Dr. Stock.* I have investigated the matter most conscientiously. For a long time past I have suspected something of the kind. Last year we had some very strange cases of illness among the visitors—typhoid cases, and cases of gastric fever—

*Mrs. Stock.* Yes, that is quite true.

*Dr. Stock.* At the time, we supposed the visitors had been infected before they came; but later on, in the winter, I began to have a different opinion; and so I set myself to examine the water, as well as I could.

*Mrs. Stock.* Then that is what you have been so busy with?

*Dr. Stock.* Indeed I have been busy, Katherine. But here I had none of the necessary scientific apparatus; so I sent samples, both of the drinking-water and of the sea-water, up to the University, to have an accurate analysis made by a chemist.

*Hov.* And have you got that?

*Dr. Stock.* [*showing him the letter*]. Here it is! It proves the presence of decomposing organic matter in the water—it is full of infusoria.[1] The water is absolutely dangerous to use, either internally or externally.

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[1] **infusoria:** microscopic organisms found in decomposing infusions of organic matter.

*Mrs. Stock.* What a mercy you discovered it in time.

*Dr. Stock.* You may well say so.

*Hov.* And what do you propose to do now, Doctor?

*Dr. Stock.* To see the matter put right—naturally.

*Hov.* Can that be done?

*Dr. Stock.* It must be done. Otherwise the Baths will be absolutely useless and wasted. But we need not anticipate that; I have a very clear idea what we shall have to do.

*Mrs. Stock.* But why have you kept this all so secret, dear?

*Dr. Stock.* Do you suppose I was going to run about the town gossiping about it, before I had absolute proof? No, thank you. I am not such a fool.

*Petra.* Still, you might have told us—

*Dr. Stock.* Not a living soul. But to-morrow you may run round to the old Badger—

*Mrs. Stock.* Oh, Thomas! Thomas!

*Dr. Stock.* Well, to your grandfather, then. The old boy will have something to be astonished at! I know he thinks I am cracked—and there are lots of other people think so too, I have noticed. But now these good folks shall see—they shall just see—! [*Walks about, rubbing his hands.*] There will be a nice upset in the town, Katherine; you can't imagine what it will be. All the conduit-pipes will have to be relaid.

*Hov.* [*getting up*]. All the conduit-pipes—?

*Dr. Stock.* Yes, of course. The intake is too low down; it will have to be lifted to a position much higher up.

*Petra.* Then you were right after all.

*Dr. Stock.* Ah, you remember, Petra—I wrote opposing the plans before the work was begun. But at that time no one would listen to me. Well, I am going to let them have it, now! Of course I have prepared a report for the Baths Committee; I have had it ready for a week, and was only waiting for this to come. [*Shows the letter.*] Now it shall go off at once. [*Goes into his room and comes back with some papers.*] Look at that! Four closely written sheets!—and the letter shall go with them. Give me a bit of paper, Katherine—something to wrap them up in. That will do! Now give it to—to—[*Stamps his foot*]—what the deuce is her name?—give it to the maid, and tell her to take it at once to the Mayor.

[MRS. STOCKMANN *takes the packet and goes out through the dining-room*

*Petra.* What do you think uncle Peter will say, father?

*Dr. Stock.* What is there for him to say? I should think he would be very glad that such an important truth has been brought to light.

*Hov.* Will you let me print a short note about your discovery in the *Messenger?*

*Dr. Stock.* I shall be very much obliged if you will.

*Hov.* It is very desirable that the public should be informed of it without delay.

*Dr. Stock.* Certainly.

*Mrs. Stock.* [*coming back*]. She has just gone with it.

*Bill.* Upon my soul, Doctor, you are going to be the foremost man in the town!

*Dr. Stock.* [*walking about happily*]. Nonsense! As a matter of fact I have done nothing more than my duty. I have only made a lucky find—that's all. Still, all the same—

*Bill.* Hovstad, don't you think the town ought to give Dr. Stockmann some sort of testimonial?

*Hov.* I will suggest it, anyway.

*Bill.* And I will speak to Aslaksen about it.

*Dr. Stock.* No, my good friends, don't let us have any of that nonsense. I won't hear of anything of the kind. And if the Baths Committee should think of voting me an increase of salary, I will not accept it. Do you hear, Katherine?—I won't accept it.

*Mrs. Stock.* You are quite right, Thomas.

*Petra* [*lifting her glass*]. Your health, father!

*Hov.* and *Bill.* Your health, Doctor! Good health!

*Hor.* [*Touches glasses with* Dr. Stockmann]. I hope it will bring you nothing but good luck.

*Dr. Stock.* Thank you, thank you, my dear fellows! I feel tremendously happy! It is a splendid thing for a man to be able to feel that he has done a service to his native town and to his fellow-citizens. Hurrah, Katherine!

*He puts his arms around her and whirls her round and round, while she protests with laughing cries. They all laugh, clap their hands, and cheer the* Doctor. *The boys put their heads in at the door to see what is going on.*

## ACT II

*The same. The door into the dining-room is shut. It is morning.* Mrs. Stockmann, *with a sealed letter in her hand, comes in from the dining-room, goes to the door of the* Doctor's *study, and peeps in.*

*Mrs. Stock.* Are you in, Thomas?

*Dr. Stock.* [*from within his room*]. Yes, I have just come in. [*Comes into the room.*] What is it?

*Mrs. Stock.* A letter from your brother.

*Dr. Stock.* Aha, let us see! [*Opens the letter and reads:*] "I return herewith the manuscript you sent me"—[*Reads on in a low murmur.*] Hm!—

*Mrs. Stock.* What does he say?

*Dr. Stock.* [*putting the papers in his pocket*]. Oh, he only writes that he will come up here himself about midday.

*Mrs. Stock.* Well, try and remember to be at home this time.

*Dr. Stock.* That will be all right; I have got through all my morning visits.

*Mrs. Stock.* I am extremely curious to know how he takes it.

*Dr. Stock.* You will see he won't like its having been I, and not he, that made the discovery.

*Mrs. Stock.* Aren't you a little nervous about that?

*Dr. Stock.* Oh, he really will be pleased enough, you know. But, at the same time, Peter is so confoundedly afraid of anyone's doing any service to the town except himself.

*Mrs. Stock.* I will tell you what, Thomas—you should be good-natured, and share the credit of this with him. Couldn't you make out that it was he who set you on the scent of this discovery?

*Dr. Stock.* I am quite willing. If only I can get the thing set right. I—

Morten Kiil *puts his head in through the door leading from the hall, looks round in an inquiring manner, and chuckles.*

*Morten Kiil* [*slyly*]. Is it—is it true?

*Mrs. Stock.* [*going to the door*]. Father!—is it you?

*Dr. Stock.* Ah, Mr. Kiil—good morning, good morning!

*Mrs. Stock.* But come along in.

*Kiil.* If it is true, I will; if not, I am off.

*Dr. Stock.* If what is true?

*Kiil.* This tale about the water supply. Is it true?

*Dr. Stock.* Certainly it is true. But how did you come to hear it?

*Kiil* [*coming in*]. Petra ran in on her way to the school—

*Dr. Stock.* Did she?

*Kiil.* Yes; and she declares that—. I thought she was only making a fool of me, but it isn't like Petra to do that.

*Dr. Stock.* Of course not. How could you imagine such a thing.

*Kiil.* Oh well, it is better never to trust anybody; you may find you have been made a fool of before you know where you are. But it is really true, all the same?

*Dr. Stock.* You can depend upon it that it is true. Won't you sit down? [*Settles him on the couch.*] Isn't it a real bit of luck for the town—

*Kiil* [*suppressing his laughter*]. A bit of luck for the town?

*Dr. Stock.* Yes, that I made the discovery in good time.

*Kiil* [*as before*]. Yes, yes, yes!—But I should never have thought you the sort of man to pull your own brother's leg like this!

*Dr. Stock.* Pull his leg!

*Mrs. Stock.* Really, father dear—

*Kiil* [*resting his hands and his chin on the handle of his stick and winking slyly *at the* Doctor]. Let me see, what was the story? Some kind of beast that had got into the water-pipes, wasn't it?

*Dr. Stock.* Infusoria—yes.

*Kiil.* And a lot of these beasts had got in, according to Petra—a tremendous lot.

*Dr. Stock.* Certainly; hundreds of thousands of them, probably.

*Kiil.* But no one can see them—isn't that so?

*Dr. Stock.* Yes; you can't see them.

*Kiil* [*with a quiet chuckle*]. Damme—it's the finest story I have ever heard!

*Dr. Stock.* What do you mean?

*Kiil.* But you will never get the Mayor to believe a thing like that.

*Dr. Stock.* We shall see.

*Kiil.* Do you think he will be fool enough to—?

*Dr. Stock.* I hope the whole town will be fools enough.

*Kiil.* The whole town! Well, it wouldn't be a bad thing. It would just serve them right, and teach them a lesson. They think themselves so much cleverer than we old fellows. They hounded me out of the council; they did, I tell you—they hounded me out. Now they shall pay for it. You pull their legs too, Thomas.

*Dr. Stock.* Really, I—

*Kiil.* You pull their legs! [*Gets up.*] If you can work it so that the Mayor and his friends all swallow the same bait, I will give ten pounds to a charity—like a shot!

*Dr. Stock.* That is very kind of you.

*Kiil.* Yes, I haven't got much money to throw away, I can tell you; but if you can work this, I will give five pounds to a charity at Christmas.

Hovstad *comes in by the hall door*

*Hov.* Good morning! [*Stops.*] Oh, I beg your pardon—

*Dr. Stock.* Not at all; come in.

*Kiil* [*with another chuckle*]. Oho!—is he in this too?

*Hov.* What do you mean?

*Dr. Stock.* Certainly he is.

*Kiil.* I might have known it! It must get into the papers. You know how to do it, Thomas! Set your wits to work. Now I must go.

*Dr. Stock.* Won't you stay a little while?

*Kiil.* No, I must be off now. You keep up this game for all it is worth; you won't repent it, I'm damned if you will! [*He goes out;* Mrs. Stockmann *follows him into the hall*

*Dr. Stock.* [*laughing*]. Just imagine—the old chap doesn't believe a word of all this about the water supply.

*Hov.* Oh that was it, then?

*Dr. Stock.* Yes, that was what we were talking about. Perhaps it is the same thing that brings you here?

*Hov.* Yes, it is. Can you spare me a few minutes, Doctor?

*Dr. Stock.* As long as you like, my dear fellow.

*Hov.* Have you heard from the Mayor yet?

*Dr. Stock.* Not yet. He is coming here later.

*Hov.* I have given the matter a great deal of thought since last night.

*Dr. Stock.* Well?

*Hov.* From your point of view, as a doctor and a man of science, this affair of the water-supply is an isolated matter. I mean, you do not realise that it involves a great many other things.

*Dr. Stock.* How, do you mean?—Let us sit down, my dear fellow. No, sit here on the couch. [Hovstad *sits down on the couch,* Dr. Stockmann *on a chair on the other side of the table.*] Now then. You mean that—?

*Hov.* You said yesterday that the pollution of the water was due to impurities in the soil.

*Dr. Stock.* Yes, unquestionably it is due to that poisonous morass up at Mölledal.

*Hov.* Begging your pardon, doctor, I fancy it is due to quite another morass altogether.

*Dr. Stock.* What morass?

*Hov.* The morass that the whole life of our town is built on and is rotting in.

*Dr. Stock.* What the deuce are you driving at, Hovstad?

*Hov.* The whole of the town's interests have, little by little, got into the hands of a pack of officials.

*Dr. Stock.* Oh, come!—they are not all officials.

*Hov.* No, but those that are not officials are at any rate the officials' friends and adherents; it is the wealthy folk, the old families in the town, that have got us entirely in their hands.

*Dr. Stock.* Yes, but after all they are men of ability and knowledge.

*Hov.* Did they show any ability or knowledge when they laid the conduit-pipes where they are now?

*Dr. Stock.* No, of course that was a great piece of stupidity on their part. But that is going to be set right now.

*Hov.* Do you think that will be all such plain sailing?

*Dr. Stock.* Plain sailing or no, it has got to be done, anyway.

*Hov.* Yes, provided the press takes up the question.

*Dr. Stock.* I don't think that will be necessary, my dear fellow, I am certain my brother—

*Hov.* Excuse me, doctor; I feel bound to tell you I am inclined to take the matter up.

*Dr. Stock.* In the paper?

*Hov.* Yes. When I took over the *People's Messenger* my idea was to break up this ring of self-opinionated old fossils who had got hold of all the influence.

*Dr. Stock.* But you know you told me yourself what the result had been; you nearly ruined your paper.

*Hov.* Yes, at the time we were obliged to climb down a peg or two, it is quite true; because there was a danger of the whole project of the Baths coming to nothing if they failed us. But now the scheme has been carried through, and we can dispense with these grand gentlemen.

*Dr. Stock.* Dispense with them, yes; but we owe them a great debt of gratitude.

*Hov.* That shall be recognised ungrudgingly. But a journalist of my democratic tendencies cannot let such an opportunity as this slip. The bubble of official infallibility must be pricked. This superstition must be destroyed, like any other.

*Dr. Stock.* I am whole-heartedly with you in that, Mr. Hovstad; if it is a superstition, away with it!

*Hov.* I should be very reluctant to bring the Mayor into it, because he is your brother. But I am sure you will agree with me that truth should be the first consideration.

*Dr. Stock.* That goes without saying. [*With sudden emphasis.*] Yes, but—but—

*Hov.* You must not misjudge me. I am neither more self-interested nor more ambitious than most men.

*Dr. Stock.* My dear fellow—who suggests anything of the kind?

*Hov.* I am of humble origin, as you know; and that has given me opportunities of knowing what is the most crying need in the humbler ranks of life. It is that they should be allowed some part in the direction of public affairs, Doctor. That is what will develop their faculties and intelligence and self respect—

*Dr. Stock.* I quite appreciate that.

*Hov.* Yes—and in my opinion a journalist incurs a heavy responsibility if he neglects a favourable opportunity of emancipating the masses—the humble and oppressed. I know well enough that in exalted circles I shall be called an agitator, and all that sort of thing; but they may call what they like. If only my conscience doesn't reproach me, then—

*Dr. Stock.* Quite right! Quite right, Mr. Hovstad. But all the same—devil take it! [*A knock is heard at the door.*] Come in!

Aslaksen *appears at the door. He is poorly but decently dressed, in black, with a slightly crumpled white neckcloth; he wears gloves and has a felt hat in his hand*

*Aslaksen* [*bowing*]. Excuse my taking the liberty, Doctor—

*Dr. Stock.* [*getting up*]. Ah, it is you, Aslaksen!

*Asl.* Yes, Doctor.

*Hov.* [*standing up*]. Is it me you want, Aslaksen?

*Asl.* No; I didn't know I should find you here. No, it was the Doctor I—

*Dr. Stock.* I am quite at your service. What is it?

*Asl.* Is what I heard from Mr. Billing true, sir—that you mean to improve our water-supply?

*Dr. Stock.* Yes, for the Baths.

*Asl.* Quite so, I understand. Well, I have come to say that I will back that up by every means in my power.

*Hov.* [*to the* DOCTOR]. You see!

*Dr. Stock.* I shall be very grateful to you, but—

*Asl.* Because it may be no bad thing to have us small tradesmen at your back. We form, as it were, a compact majority in the town—if we choose. And it is always a good thing to have the majority with you, Doctor.

*Dr. Stock.* That is undeniably true; but I confess I don't see why such unusual precautions should be necessary in this case. It seems to me that such a plain, straightforward thing—

*Asl.* Oh, it may be very desirable, all the same. I know our local authorities so well; officials are not generally very ready to act on proposals that come from other people. That is why I think it would not be at all amiss if we made a little demonstration.

*Hov.* That's right.

*Dr. Stock.* Demonstration, did you say? What on earth are you going to make a demonstration about?

*Asl.* We shall proceed with the greatest moderation, Doctor. Moderation is always my aim; it is the greatest virtue in a citizen—at least, I think so.

*Dr. Stock.* It is well known to be a characteristic of yours, Mr. Aslaksen.

*Asl.* Yes, I think I may pride myself on that. And this matter of the water-supply is of the greatest importance to us small tradesmen. The Baths promise to be a regular gold-mine for the town. We shall all make our living out of them, especially those of us who are householders. That is why we will back up the project as strongly as possible. And as I am at present Chairman of the Householders' Association—

*Dr. Stock.* Yes—?

*Asl.* And, what is more, local secretary of the Temperance Society—you know, sir, I suppose, that I am a worker in the temperance cause?

*Dr. Stock.* Of course, of course.

*Asl.* Well, you can understand that I come into contact with a great many people. And as I have the reputation of a temperate and law-abiding citizen—like yourself, Doctor—I have a certain influence in the town, a little bit of power, if I may be allowed to say so.

*Dr. Stock.* I know that quite well, Mr. Aslaksen.

*Asl.* So you see it would be an easy matter for me to set on foot some testimonial, if necessary.

*Dr. Stock.* A testimonial?

*Asl.* Yes, some kind of an address of thanks from the townsmen for your share in a matter of such importance to the community. I need scarcely say that it would have to be drawn up with the greatest regard to moderation, so as not to offend the authorities—who, after all, have the reins in their hands. If we pay strict attention to that, no one can take it amiss, I should think!

*Hov.* Well, and even supposing they didn't like it—

*Asl.* No, no, no; there must be no discourtesy to the authorities, Mr. Hovstad. It is no use falling foul of those upon whom our welfare so closely depends. I have done that in my time, and no good ever comes of it. But no one can take exception to a reasonable and frank expression of a citizen's views.

*Dr. Stock.* [*shaking him by the hand*]. I can't tell you, dear Mr. Aslaksen, how extremely pleased I am to find such hearty support among my fellow-citizens. I am delighted—delighted! Now, you will take a small glass of sherry, eh?

*Asl.* No, thank you; I never drink alcohol of that kind.

*Dr. Stock.* Well, what do you say to a glass of beer, then?

*Asl.* Nor that either, thank you, Doctor. I never drink anything as early as this. I am going into town now to talk this over with one or two householders, and prepare the ground.

*Dr. Stock.* It is tremendously kind of you, Mr. Aslaksen; but I really cannot understand the necessity for all these precautions. It seems to me that the thing should go of itself.

*Asl.* The authorities are somewhat slow to move, Doctor. Far be it from me to seem to blame them—

*Hov.* We are going to stir them up in the paper to-morrow, Aslaksen.

*Asl.* But not violently, I trust, Mr. Hovstad. Proceed with moderation, or you will do nothing with them. You may take my advice; I have gathered my experience in the school of life. Well, I must say good-bye, Doctor. You know now that we small tradesmen are at your back at all events, like a solid wall. You have the compact majority on your side, Doctor.

*Dr. Stock.* I am very much obliged, dear Mr. Aslaksen. [*Shakes hands with him.*] Good-bye, good-bye.

*Asl.* Are you going my way, towards the printing-office, Mr. Hovstad?

*Hov.* I will come later; I have something to settle up first.

*Asl.* Very well.

[*Bows and goes out;* STOCKMANN *follows him into the hall*

*Hov.* [*as* STOCKMANN *comes in again*]. Well, what do you think of that, Doctor? Don't you think it is high time we stirred a little life into all this slackness and vacillation and cowardice?

*Dr. Stock.* Are you referring to Aslaksen?

*Hov.* Yes, I am. He is one of those who are floundering in a bog—decent enough fellow though he may be, otherwise. And most of the people here are in just the same case—see-sawing and edging first to one side and then to the other, so overcome with caution and scruple that they never dare to take any decided step.

*Dr. Stock.* Yes, but Aslaksen seemed to me so thoroughly well-intentioned.

*Hov.* There is one thing I esteem higher than that; and that is for a man to be self-reliant and sure of himself.

*Dr. Stock.* I think you are perfectly right there.

*Hov.* That is why I want to seize this opportunity, and try if I cannot manage to put a little virility into these well-intentioned people for once. The idol of Authority must be shattered in this town. This gross and inexcusable blunder about the water-supply must be brought home to the mind of every municipal voter.

*Dr. Stock.* Very well; if you are of opinion that it is for the good of the community, so be it. But not until I have had a talk with my brother.

*Hov.* Anyway, I will get a leading article ready; and if the Mayor refuses to take the matter up—

*Dr. Stock.* How can you suppose such a thing possible?

*Hov.* It is conceivable. And in that case—

*Dr. Stock.* In that case I promise you—. Look here, in that case you may print my report—every word of it.

*Hov.* May I? Have I your word for it?

*Dr. Stock.* [*giving him the MS.*]. Here it is; take it with you. It can do no harm for you to read it through, and you can give it me back later on.

*Hov.* Good, good! That is what I will do. And now good-bye, Doctor.

*Dr. Stock.* Good-bye, good-bye. You will see everything will run quite smoothly, Mr. Hovstad—quite smoothly.

*Hov.* Hm!—we shall see.

[*Bows and goes out*

*Dr. Stock.* [*opens the dining-room door and looks in*]. Katherine! Oh, you are back, Petra?

*Petra* [*coming in*]. Yes, I have just come from the school.

*Mrs. Stock.* [*coming in*]. Has he not been here yet?

*Dr. Stock.* Peter? No. But I have had a long talk with Hovstad. He is quite excited about my discovery. I find it has a much wider bearing than I at first imagined. And he has put his paper at my disposal if necessity should arise.

*Mrs. Stock.* Do you think it will?

*Dr. Stock.* Not for a moment. But at all events it makes me feel proud to know that I have the liberal-minded independent press on my side. Yes, and —just imagine—I have had a visit from the Chairman of the Householders' Association!

*Mrs. Stock.* Oh! what did he want?

*Dr. Stock.* To offer me his support too. They will support me in a body if it should be necessary. Katherine—do you know what I have got behind me?

*Mrs. Stock.* Behind you? No, what have you got behind you?

*Dr. Stock.* The compact majority.

*Mrs. Stock.* Really? Is that a good thing for you, Thomas?

*Dr. Stock.* I should think it was a good thing. [*Walks up and down rubbing his hands.*] By Jove, it's a fine thing to feel this bond of brotherhood between oneself and one's fellow citizens!

*Petra.* And to be able to do so much that is good and useful, father!

*Dr. Stock.* And for one's own native town into the bargain, my child!

*Mrs. Stock.* That was a ring at the bell.

*Dr. Stock.* It must be he, then. [*A knock is heard at the door.*] Come in!

*Peter* [*comes in from the hall*]. Good morning.

*Dr. Stock.* Glad to see you, Peter!

*Mrs. Stock.* Good morning, Peter. How are you?

*Peter.* So so, thank you. [*To* Dr. Stockmann.] I received from you yesterday, after office hours, a report dealing with the condition of the water at the Baths.

*Dr. Stock.* Yes. Have you read it?

*Peter.* Yes, I have.

*Dr. Stock.* And what have you to say to it?

*Peter* [*with a sidelong glance*]. Hm!—

*Mrs. Stock.* Come along, Petra.

[*She and* Petra *go into the room on the left*

*Peter* [*after a pause*]. Was it necessary to make all these investigations behind my back?

*Dr. Stock.* Yes, because until I was absolutely certain about it—

*Peter.* Then you mean that you are absolutely certain now?

*Dr. Stock.* Surely you are convinced of that.

*Peter.* Is it your intention to bring this document before the Baths Committee as a sort of official communication?

*Dr. Stock.* Certainly. Something must be done in the matter—and quickly.

*Peter.* As usual, you employ violent expressions in your report. You say, amongst other things, that what we offer visitors in our Baths is a permanent supply of poison.

*Dr. Stock.* Well, can you describe it any other way, Peter? Just think—water that is poisonous, whether you drink it or bathe in it! And this we offer to the poor sick folk who come to us trustfully and pay us at an exorbitant rate to be made well again!

*Peter.* And your reasoning leads you to this conclusion, that we must build a sewer to draw off the alleged impurities from Mölledal and must relay the water-conduits.

*Dr. Stock.* Yes. Do you see any other way out of it? I don't.

*Peter.* I made a pretext this morning to go and see the town engineer, and, as if only half seriously, broached the subject of these proposals as a thing we might perhaps have to take under consideration some time later on.

*Dr. Stock.* Some time later on!

*Peter.* He smiled at what he considered to be my extravagance, naturally. Have you taken the trouble to consider what your proposed alterations would cost? According to the information I obtained, the expenses would probably mount up to fifteen or twenty thousand pounds.

*Dr. Stock.* Would it cost so much?

*Peter.* Yes; and the worst part of it would be that the work would take at least two years.

*Dr. Stock.* Two years? Two whole years?

*Peter.* At least. And what are we to do with the Baths in the meantime? Close them? Indeed we should be obliged to. And do you suppose any one would come near the place after it had got about that the water was dangerous?

*Dr. Stock.* Yes, but, Peter, that is what it is.

*Peter.* And all this at this juncture—just as the Baths are beginning to be known. There are other towns in the neighbourhood with qualifications to attract visitors for bathing purposes. Don't you suppose they would immediately strain every nerve to divert the entire stream of strangers to themselves? Unquestionably they would; and then where should we be? We should probably have to abandon the whole thing, which has cost us so much money—and then you would have ruined your native town.

*Dr. Stock.* I—should have ruined—!

*Peter.* It is simply and solely through the Baths that the town has before it any future worth mentioning. You know that just as well as I.

*Dr. Stock.* But what do you think ought to be done, then?

*Peter.* Your report has not convinced me that the condition of the water at the Baths is as bad as you represent it to be.

*Dr. Stock.* I tell you it is even worse! —or at all events it will be in summer, when the warm weather comes.

*Peter.* As I said, I believe you exaggerate the matter considerably. A capable physician ought to know what measures to take—he ought to be capable of preventing injurious influences or of remedying them if they become obviously persistent.

*Dr. Stock.* Well? What more?

*Peter.* The water supply for the Baths is now an established fact, and in consequence must be treated as such. But probably the Committee, at its discretion, will not be disinclined to consider the question of how far it might be possible to introduce certain improvements consistently with a reasonable expenditure.

*Dr. Stock.* And do you suppose that I will have anything to do with such a piece of trickery as that?

*Peter.* Trickery!!

*Dr. Stock.* Yes, it would be a trick—a fraud, a lie, a downright crime towards the public, towards the whole community!

*Peter.* I have not, as I remarked before, been able to convince myself that there is actually any imminent danger.

*Dr. Stock.* You have! It is impossible that you should not be convinced. I know I have represented the facts absolutely truthfully and fairly. And you know it very well, Peter, only you won't acknowledge it. It was owing to your action that both the Baths and the water-conduits were built where they are; and that is what you won't acknowledge—that damnable blunder of yours. Pooh!—do you suppose I don't see through you?

*Peter.* And even if that were true? If I perhaps guard my reputation somewhat anxiously, it is in the interests of the town. Without moral authority I am powerless to direct public affairs as seems, to my judgment, to be best for the common good. And on that account —and for various other reasons too—it appears to me to be a matter of importance that your report should not be delivered to the Committee. In the interests of the public, you must withhold it. Then, later on, I will raise the question and we will do our best, privately; but nothing of this unfortunate affair—not a single word of it—must come to the ears of the public.

*Dr. Stock.* I am afraid you will not be able to prevent that now, my dear Peter.

*Peter.* It must and shall be prevented.

*Dr. Stock.* It is no use, I tell you. There are too many people that know about it.

*Peter.* That know about it? Who? Surely you don't mean those fellows on the *People's Messenger?*

*Dr. Stock.* Yes, they know. The liberal-minded independent press is going to see that you do your duty.

*Peter* [*after a short pause*]. You are an extraordinarily independent man, Thomas. Have you given no thought to the consequences this may have for yourself?

*Dr. Stock.* Consequences?—for me?

*Peter.* For you and yours, yes.

*Dr. Stock.* What the deuce do you mean?

*Peter.* I believe I have always behaved in a brotherly way to you—have always been ready to oblige or to help you?

*Dr. Stock.* Yes, you have, and I am grateful to you for it.

*Peter.* There is no need. Indeed, to some extent I was forced to do so—for my own sake. I always hoped that, if I helped to improve your financial position, I should be able to keep some check on you.

*Dr. Stock.* What!! Then it was only for your own sake—!

*Peter.* Up to a certain point, yes. It is painful for a man in an official position to have his nearest relative compromising himself time after time.

*Dr. Stock.* And do you consider that I do that?

*Peter.* Yes, unfortunately, you do, without even being aware of it. You have a restless, pugnacious, rebellious disposition. And then there is that disastrous propensity of yours to want to write about every sort of possible and impossible thing. The moment an idea comes into your head, you must needs go and write a newspaper article or a whole pamphlet about it.

*Dr. Stock.* Well, but is it not the duty of a citizen to let the public share in any new ideas he may have?

*Peter.* Oh, the public doesn't require any new ideas. The public is best served by the good, old-established ideas it already has.

*Dr. Stock.* And that is your honest opinion?

*Peter.* Yes, and for once I must talk frankly to you. Hitherto I have tried to avoid doing so, because I know how irritable you are; but now I must tell you the truth, Thomas. You have no conception what an amount of harm you do yourself by your impetuosity. You complain of the authorities, you even complain of the government—you are always pulling them to pieces; you insist that you have been neglected and persecuted. But what else can such a cantankerous man as you expect?

*Dr. Stock.* What next! Cantankerous, am I?

*Peter.* Yes, Thomas, you are an extremely cantankerous man to work with —I know that to my cost. You disregard everything that you ought to have consideration for. You seem completely to forget that it is me you have to thank for your appointment here as medical officer to the Baths—

*Dr. Stock.* I was entitled to it as a matter of course!—I and nobody else! I was the first person to see that the town could be made into a flourishing watering-place, and I was the only one who saw it at that time. I had to fight single-handed in support of the idea for many years; and I wrote and wrote—

*Peter.* Undoubtedly. But things were not ripe for the scheme then—though, of course, you could not judge of that in your out-of-the-way corner up north. But as soon as the opportune moment came I—and the others—took the matter into our hands—

*Dr. Stock.* Yes, and made this mess of all my beautiful plan. It is pretty obvious now what clever fellows you were!

*Peter.* To my mind the whole thing only seems to mean that you are seeking another outlet for your combativeness. You want to pick a quarrel with your superiors—an old habit of yours. You cannot put up with any authority over you. You look askance at anyone who occupies a superior official position; you regard him as a personal enemy, and then any stick is good enough to beat him with. But now I have called your attention to the fact that the town's interests are at stake—and, incidentally, my own too. And therefore I must tell you, Thomas, that you will find me inexorable with regard to what I am about to require you to do.

*Dr. Stock.* And what is that?

*Peter.* As you have been so indiscreet as to speak of this delicate matter to outsiders, despite the fact that you ought to have treated it as entirely official and confidential, it is obviously impossible to hush it up now. All sorts of rumours will get about directly, and everybody who has a grudge against us will take care to embellish these rumours. So it will be necessary for you to refute them publicly.

*Dr. Stock.* I! How? I don't understand.

*Peter.* What we shall expect is that, after making further investigations, you will come to the conclusion that the matter is not by any means as dangerous or as critical as you imagined in the first instance.

*Dr. Stock.* Oho!—so that is what you expect!

*Peter.* And, what is more, we shall expect you to make public profession of your confidence in the Committee and in their readiness to consider fully and conscientiously what steps may be necessary to remedy any possible defects.

*Dr. Stock.* But you will never be able to do that by patching and tinkering at it—never! Take my word for it, Peter; I mean what I say, as deliberately and emphatically as possible.

*Peter.* As an officer under the Committee, you have no right to any individual opinion.

*Dr. Stock.* [*amazed*]. No right?

*Peter.* In your official capacity, no. As a private person, it is quite another matter. But as a subordinate member of the staff of the Baths, you have no right to express any opinion which runs contrary to that of your superiors.

*Dr. Stock.* This is too much! I, a doctor, a man of science, have no right to—!

*Peter.* The matter in hand is not simply a scientific one. It is a complicated matter, and has its economic as well as its technical side.

*Dr. Stock.* I don't care what it is! I intend to be free to express my opinion on any subject under the sun.

*Peter.* As you please—but not on any subject concerning the Baths. That we forbid.

*Dr. Stock.* [*shouting*]. You forbid—! You! A pack of—

*Peter.* *I* forbid it—I, your chief; and if I forbid it, you have to obey.

*Dr. Stock.* [*controlling himself*]. Peter—if you were not my brother—

*Petra* [*throwing open the door*]. Father, you shan't stand this!

*Mrs. Stock.* [*coming in after her*]. Petra, Petra!

*Peter.* Oh, so you have been eavesdropping.

*Mrs. Stock.* You were talking so loud, we couldn't help—

*Petra.* Yes, I was listening,

*Peter.* Well, after all, I am very glad—

*Dr. Stock.* [*going up to him*]. You were saying something about forbidding and obeying?

*Peter.* You obliged me to take that tone with you.

*Dr. Stock.* And so I am to give myself the lie, publicly?

*Peter.* We consider it absolutely necessary that you should make some such public statement as I have asked for.

*Dr. Stock.* And if I do not—obey?

*Peter.* Then we shall publish a statement ourselves to reassure the public.

*Dr. Stock.* Very well; but in that case I shall use my pen against you. I stick to what I have said; I will show that I am right and that you are wrong. And what will you do then?

*Peter.* Then I shall not be able to prevent your being dismissed.

*Dr. Stock.* What—?

*Petra.* Father—dismissed!

*Mrs. Stock.* Dismissed!

*Peter.* Dismissed from the staff of the Baths. I shall be obliged to propose that you shall immediately be given notice, and shall not be allowed any further participation in the Baths' affairs.

*Dr. Stock.* You would dare to do that!

*Peter.* It is you that are playing the daring game.

*Petra.* Uncle, that is a shameful way to treat a man like father!

*Mrs. Stock.* Do hold your tongue, Petra!

*Peter* [*looking at* Petra]. Oh, so we volunteer our opinions already, do we? Of course. [*To* Mrs. Stockmann.] Katherine, I imagine you are the most sensible person in this house. Use any influence you may have over your husband, and make him see what this will entail for his family as well as—

*Dr. Stock.* My family is my own concern and nobody else's!

*Peter.* —for his own family, as I was saying, as well as for the town he lives in.

*Dr. Stock.* It is I who have the real good of the town at heart! I want to lay bare the defects that sooner or later must come to the light of day. I will show whether I love my native town.

*Peter.* You, who in your blind obstinacy want to cut off the most important source of the town's welfare?

*Dr. Stock.* The source is poisoned, man! Are you mad? We are making our living by retailing filth and corruption! The whole of our flourishing municipal life derives its sustenance from a lie!

*Peter.* All imagination—or something even worse. The man who can throw out such offensive insinuations about his native town must be an enemy to our community.

*Dr. Stock.* [*going up to him*]. Do you dare to—!

*Mrs. Stock.* [*throwing herself between them*]. Thomas!

*Petra* [*catching her father by the arm*]. Don't lose your temper, father!

*Peter.* I will not expose myself to violence. Now you have had a warning; so reflect on what you owe to yourself and your family. Good-bye.

[*Goes out*

*Dr. Stock.* [*walking up and down*]. Am I to put up with such treatment as this? In my own house, Katherine! What do you think of that!

*Mrs. Stock.* Indeed it is both shameful and absurd, Thomas—

*Petra.* If only I could give uncle a piece of my mind—

*Dr. Stock.* It is my own fault. I ought to have flown at him long ago!—shown my teeth!—bitten! To hear him call me an enemy to our community! Me! I shall not take that lying down, upon my soul!

*Mrs. Stock.* But, dear Thomas, your brother has power on his side—

*Dr. Stock.* Yes, but I have right on mine, I tell you.

*Mrs. Stock.* Oh yes, right—right. What is the use of having right on your side if you have not got might?

*Petra.* Oh, mother!—how can you say such a thing!

*Dr. Stock.* Do you imagine that in a free country it is no use having right on your side? You are absurd, Katherine. Besides, haven't I got the liberal-minded, independent press to lead the way, and the compact majority behind me? That is might enough, I should think!

*Mrs. Stock.* But, good heavens, Thomas, you don't mean to—?

*Dr. Stock.* Don't mean to what?

*Mrs. Stock.* To set yourself up in opposition to your brother.

*Dr. Stock.* In God's name, what else do you suppose I should do but take my stand on right and truth?

*Petra.* Yes, I was just going to say that.

*Mrs. Stock.* But it won't do you any earthly good. If they won't do it, they won't.

*Dr. Stock.* Oho, Katherine! Just give me time, and you will see how I will carry the war into their camp.

*Mrs. Stock.* Yes, you carry the war into their camp, and you get your dismissal—that is what you will do.

*Dr. Stock.* In any case I shall have done my duty towards the public—towards the community. I, who am called its enemy!

*Mrs. Stock.* But towards your family, Thomas? Towards your own home! Do you think that is doing your duty towards those you have to provide for?

*Petra.* Ah, don't think always first of us, mother.

*Mrs. Stock.* Oh, it is easy for you to talk; you are able to shift for yourself, if need be. But remember the boys, Thomas; and think a little too of yourself, and of me.

*Dr. Stock.* I think you are out of your senses, Katherine. If I were to be such a miserable coward as to go on my knees to Peter and his damned crew, do you suppose I should ever know an hour's peace of mind all my life afterwards?

*Mrs. Stock.* I don't know anything about that; but God preserve us from the peace of mind we shall have, all the same, if you go on defying him! You will find yourself again without the means of subsistence, with no income to count upon. I should think we had had enough of that in the old days. Remember that, Thomas; think what that means.

*Dr. Stock.* [*collecting himself with a struggle and clenching his fists*]. And this is what this slavery can bring upon a free, honourable man! Isn't it horrible, Katherine?

*Mrs. Stock.* Yes, it is sinful to treat you so, it is perfectly true. But, good heavens, one has to put up with so much injustice in this world.—There are the boys, Thomas. Look at them! What is to become of them? Oh, no, no, you can never have the heart—.

Ejlif *and* Morten *have come in while she was speaking, with their school books in their hands*

*Dr. Stock.* The boys!— [*Recovers himself suddenly.*] No, even if the whole world goes to pieces, I will never bow my neck to this yoke! [*Goes towards his room.*]

*Mrs. Stock.* [*following him*]. Thomas—what are you going to do!

*Dr. Stock.* [*at his door*]. I mean to have the right to look my sons in the face when they are grown men.

[*Goes into his room*

*Mrs. Stock.* [*bursting into tears*]. God help us all!

*Petra.* Father is splendid! He will not give in.

*The boys look on in amazement;* Petra *signs to them not to speak.*

## ACT III

*The editorial office of the* People's Messenger. *The entrance door is on the left-hand side of the back wall; on the right-hand side is another door with glass panels through which the printing-room can be seen. Another door in the right-hand wall. In the middle of the room is a large table covered with papers, newspapers and books. In the foreground on the left a window, before which stands a desk and a high stool. There are a couple of easy chairs by the table, and other chairs standing along the wall. The room is dingy and uncomfortable; the furniture is old, the chairs stained and torn. In the printing-room the compositors are seen at work, and a printer is working a hand-press.* Hovstad *is sitting at the desk, writing.* Billing *comes in from the right with* Dr. Stockmann's *manuscript in his hand.*

*Bill.* Well, I must say!

*Hov.* [*still writing*]. Have you read it through?

*Bill.* [*laying the MS. on the desk*]. Yes, indeed I have.

*Hov.* Don't you think the Doctor hits them pretty hard?

*Bill.* Hard? Bless my soul, he's crushing! Every word falls like—how shall I put it?—like the blow of a sledgehammer.

*Hov.* Yes, but they are not the people to throw up the sponge at the first blow.

*Bill.* That is true; and for that reason we must strike blow upon blow until the whole of this aristocracy tumbles to pieces. As I sat in there reading this, I almost seemed to see a revolution in being.

*Hov.* [*turning round*]. Hush!—Speak so that Aslaksen cannot hear you.

*Bill.* [*lowering his voice*]. Aslaksen is a chicken-hearted chap, a coward; there is nothing of the man in him. But this time you will insist on your own way, won't you? You will put the Doctor's article in?

*Hov.* Yes, and if the Mayor doesn't like it—

*Bill.* That will be the devil of a nuisance.

*Hov.* Well, fortunately we can turn the situation to good account, whatever happens. If the Mayor will not fall in with the Doctor's project, he will have all the small tradesmen down on him—the whole of the Householders' Association and the rest of them. And if he does fall in with it, he will fall out with the whole crowd of large shareholders in the Baths, who up to now have been his most valuable supporters—

*Bill.* Yes, because they will certainly have to fork out a pretty penny—

*Hov.* Yes, you may be sure they will. And in this way the ring will be broken up, you see, and then in every issue of the paper we will enlighten the public on the Mayor's incapability on one point and another, and make it clear that all the positions of trust in the town, the whole control of municipal affairs, ought to be put in the hands of the Liberals.

*Bill.* That is perfectly true! I see it coming—I see it coming; we are on the threshold of a revolution!

*A knock is heard at the door.*

*Hov.* Hush! [*Calls out.*] Come in! [DR. STOCKMANN *comes in by the street door.* HOVSTAD *goes to meet him.*] Ah, it is you, Doctor! Well?

*Dr. Stock.* You may set to work and print it, Mr. Hovstad!

*Hov.* Has it come to that, then?

*Bill.* Hurrah!

*Dr. Stock.* Yes, print away. Undoubtedly it has come to that. Now they must take what they get. There is going to be a fight in the town, Mr. Billing!

*Bill.* War to the knife, I hope! We will get our knives to their throats, Doctor!

*Dr. Stock.* This article is only a beginning. I have already got four or five more sketched out in my head. Where is Aslaksen?

*Bill.* [*Calls into the printing-room*]. Aslaksen, just come here for a minute!

*Hov.* Four or five more articles, did you say? On the same subject?

*Dr. Stock.* No—far from it, my dear fellow. No, they are about quite another matter. But they all spring from the question of the water-supply and the drainage. One thing leads to another, you know. It is like beginning to pull down an old house, exactly.

*Bill.* Upon my soul, it's true; you find you are not done till you have pulled all the rubbish down.

*Asl.* [*coming in*]. Pulled down? You are not thinking of pulling down the Baths, surely, Doctor?

*Hov.* Far from it, don't be afraid.

*Dr. Stock.* No, we meant something quite different. Well, what do you think of my article, Mr. Hovstad?

*Hov.* I think it is simply a masterpiece—

*Dr. Stock.* Do you really think so? Well, I am very pleased, very pleased.

*Hov.* It is so clear and intelligible. One need have no special knowledge to understand the bearing of it. You will have every enlightened man on your side.

*Asl.* And every prudent man too, I hope?

*Bill.* The prudent and the imprudent—almost the whole town.

*Asl.* In that case we may venture to print it.

*Dr. Stock.* I should think so!

*Hov.* We will put it in to-morrow morning.

*Dr. Stock.* Of course—you must not lose a single day. What I wanted to ask you, Mr. Aslaksen, was if you would supervise the printing of it yourself.

*Asl.* With pleasure.

*Dr. Stock.* Take care of it as if it were a treasure! No misprints—every word is important. I will look in again a little later; perhaps you will be able to let me see a proof. I can't tell you how eager I am to see it in print, and see it burst upon the public—

*Bill.* Burst upon them—yes, like a flash of lightning!

*Dr. Stock.* —And to have it submitted to the judgment of my intelligent fellow-townsmen. You cannot imagine what I have gone through to-day. I have been threatened first with one thing and then with another; they have tried to rob me of my most elementary rights as a man—

*Bill.* What! Your rights as a man!

*Dr. Stock.* —They have tried to degrade me, to make a coward of me, to force me to put personal interests before my most sacred convictions—

*Bill.* That is too much—I'm damned if it isn't.

*Hov.* Oh, you mustn't be surprised at anything from that quarter.

*Dr. Stock.* Well, they will get the worst of it with me; they may assure themselves of that. I shall consider the *People's Messenger* my sheet-anchor now, and every single day I will bombard them with one article after another, like bomb-shells—

*Asl.* Yes, but—

*Bill.* Hurrah!—it is war, it is war!

*Dr. Stock.* I shall smite them to the ground—I shall crush them—I shall break down all their defences, before the eyes of the honest public! That is what I shall do!

*Asl.* Yes, but in moderation, Doctor—proceed with moderation—

*Bill.* Not a bit of it, not a bit of it! Don't spare the dynamite!

*Dr. Stock.* Because it is not merely a question of water-supply and drains now, you know. No—it is the whole of our social life that we have got to purify and disinfect—

*Bill.* Spoken like a deliverer!

*Dr. Stock.* All the incapables must be turned out, you understand—and that in every walk of life! Endless vistas have opened themselves to my mind's eye to-day. I cannot see it all quite clearly yet, but I shall in time. Young and vigorous standard-bearers—those are what we need and must seek, my friends; we must have new men in command at all our outposts.

*Bill.* Hear, hear!

*Dr. Stock.* We only need to stand by one another, and it will all be perfectly easy. The revolution will be launched like a ship that runs smoothly off the stocks. Don't you think so?

*Hov.* For my part I think we have now a prospect of getting the municipal authority into the hands where it should lie.

*Asl.* And if only we proceed with moderation, I cannot imagine that there will be any risk.

*Dr. Stock.* Who the devil cares whether there is any risk or not! What I am doing, I am doing in the name of truth and for the sake of my conscience.

*Hov.* You are a man who deserves to be supported, Doctor.

*Asl.* Yes, there is no denying that the Doctor is a true friend to the town—a real friend to the community, that he is.

*Bill.* Take my word for it, Aslaksen, Dr. Stockmann is a friend of the people.

*Asl.* I fancy the Householders' Association will make use of that expression before long.

*Dr. Stock.* [*affected, grasps their hands*]. Thank you, thank you, my dear staunch friends. It is very refreshing to me to hear you say that; my brother called me something quite different. By Jove, he shall have it back, with interest! But now I must be off to see a poor devil—. I will come back, as I said. Keep a very careful eye on the manuscript, Aslaksen, and don't for worlds leave out any of my notes of exclamation! Rather put one or two more in! Capital, capital! Well, good-bye for the present—good-bye, good-bye!

[*They show him to the door, and bow him out*

*Hov.* He may prove an invaluably useful man to us.

*Asl.* Yes, so long as he confines himself to this matter of the Baths. But if he goes farther afield, I don't think it would be advisable to follow him.

*Hov.* Hm!—that all depends—

*Bill.* You are so infernally timid, Aslaksen!

*Asl.* Timid? Yes, when it is a question of the local authorities, I am timid, Mr. Billing; it is a lesson I have learnt in the school of experience, let me tell you. But try me in higher politics, in matters that concern the government itself, and then see if I am timid.

*Bill.* No, you aren't, I admit. But this is simply contradicting yourself.

*Asl.* I am a man with a conscience, and that is the whole matter. If you attack the government, you don't do the community any harm, anyway; those fellows pay no attention to attacks, you see—they go on just as they are, in spite of them. But *local* authorities are different; they *can* be turned out, and then perhaps you may get an ignorant lot into office who may do irreparable harm to the householders and everybody else.

*Hov.* But what of the education of citizens by self-government—don't you attach any importance to that?

*Asl.* When a man has interests of his own to protect, he cannot think of everything, Mr. Hovstad.

*Hov.* Then I hope I shall never have interests of my own to protect!

*Bill.* Hear, hear!

*Asl.* [*with a smile*]. Hm! [*Points to the desk.*] Mr. Sheriff Stensgaard was your predecessor at that editorial desk.

*Bill.* [*spitting*]. Bah! That turncoat.

*Hov.* I am not a weathercock—and never will be.

*Asl.* A politician should never be too certain of anything, Mr. Hovstad. And as for you, Mr. Billing, I should think it is time for you to be taking in a reef or two in your sails, seeing that you are applying for the post of secretary to the Bench.

*Bill.* I—!

*Hov.* Are you, Billing?

*Bill.* Well, yes—but you must clearly understand I am only doing it to annoy the bigwigs.

*Asl.* Anyhow, it is no business of mine. But if I am to be accused of timidity and of inconsistency in my principles, this is what I want to point out: my political past is an open book. I have never changed, except perhaps to become a little more moderate, you see. My heart is still with the people; but I don't deny that my reason has a certain bias towards the authorities—the local ones, I mean.

[*Goes into the printing-room*

*Bill.* Oughtn't we to try and get rid of him, Hovstad?

*Hov.* Do you know anyone else who will advance the money for our paper and printing bill?

*Bill.* It is an infernal nuisance that we don't possess some capital to trade on.

*Hov.* [*sitting down at his desk*]. Yes, if we only had that, then—

*Bill.* Suppose you were to apply to Dr. Stockmann?

*Hov.* [*turning over some papers*]. What is the use? He has got nothing.

*Bill.* No, but he has got a warm man in the back-ground, old Morten Kiil—"the Badger," as they call him.

*Hov.* [*writing*]. Are you so sure *he* has got anything?

*Bill.* Good Lord, of course he has! And some of it must come to the Stockmanns. Most probably he will do something for the children, at all events.

*Hov.* [*turning half round*]. Are you counting on that?

*Bill.* Counting on it? Of course I am not counting on anything.

*Hov.* That is right. And I should not count on the secretaryship to the Bench either, if I were you; for I can assure you—you won't get it.

*Bill.* Do you think I am not quite aware of that? My object is precisely *not* to get it. A slight of that kind stimulates a man's fighting power—it is like getting a supply of fresh bile—and I am sure one needs that badly enough in a hole-and-corner place like this, where it is so seldom anything happens to stir one up.

*Hov.* [*writing*]. Quite so, quite so.

*Bill.* Ah, I shall be heard of yet!—Now I shall go and write the appeal to the Householders' Asociation.

[*Goes into the room on the right*

*Hov.* [*sitting at his desk, biting his penholder, says slowly*]. Hm!—that's it, is it. [*A knock is heard.*] Come in! [Petra *comes in by the outer door.* Hovstad *gets up.*] What, you!—here?

*Petra.* Yes, you must forgive me—

*Hov.* [*pulling a chair forward*]. Won't you sit down?

*Petra.* No, thank you; I must go again in a moment.

*Hov.* Have you come with a message from your father, by any chance?

*Petra.* No, I have come on my own account. [*Takes a book out of her coat pocket.*] Here is the English story.

*Hov.* Why have you brought it back?

*Petra.* Because I am not going to translate it.

*Hov.* But you promised me faithfully—

*Petra.* Yes, but then I had not read it. I don't suppose you have read it either?

*Hov.* No, you know quite well I don't understand English; but—

*Petra.* Quite so. That is why I wanted to tell you that you must find something else. [*Lays the book on the table*]. You can't use this for the *People's Messenger*.

*Hov.* Why not?

*Petra.* Because it conflicts with all your opinions.

*Hov.* Oh, for that matter—

*Petra.* You don't understand me. The burden of this story is that there is a supernatural power that looks after the so-called good people in this world and makes everything happen for the best in their case—while all the so-called bad people are punished.

*Hov.* Well, but that is all right. That is just what our readers want.

*Petra.* And are you going to be the one to give it to them? For myself, I do not believe a word of it. You know quite well that things do not happen so in reality.

*Hov.* You are perfectly right; but an editor cannot always act as he would prefer. He is often obliged to bow to the wishes of the public in unimportant matters. Politics are the most important thing in life—for a newspaper, anyway; and if I want to carry my public with me on the path that leads to liberty and progress, I must not frighten them away. If they find a moral tale of this sort in the serial at the bottom of the page, they will be all the more ready to read what is printed above it; they feel more secure, as it were.

*Petra.* For shame! You would never go and set a snare like that for your readers; you are not a spider!

*Hov.* [*smiling*]. Thank you for having such a good opinion of me. No; as a matter of fact that is Billing's idea and not mine.

*Petra.* Billing's!

*Hov.* Yes; anyway he propounded that theory here one day. And it is Billing who is so anxious to have that story in the paper; I don't know anything about the book.

*Petra.* But how can Billing, with his emancipated views—

*Hov.* Oh, Billing is a many-sided man. He is applying for the post of secretary to the Bench, too, I hear.

*Petra.* I don't believe it, Mr. Hovstad. How could he possibly bring himself to do such a thing?

*Hov.* Ah, you must ask him that.

*Petra.* I should never have thought it of him.

*Hov.* [*looking more closely at her*]. No? Does it really surprise you so much?

*Petra.* Yes. Or perhaps not altogether. Really, I don't quite know—

*Hov.* We journalists are not much worth, Miss Stockmann.

*Petra.* Do you really mean that?

*Hov.* I think so sometimes.

*Petra.* Yes, in the ordinary affairs of everyday life, perhaps; I can understand that. But now, when you have taken a weighty matter in hand—

*Hov.* This matter of your father's, you mean?

*Petra.* Exactly. It seems to me that now you must feel you are a man worth more than most.

*Hov.* Yes, to-day, I do feel something of that sort.

*Petra.* Of course you do, don't you? It is a splendid vocation you have chosen—to smooth the way for the march of unappreciated truths, and new and courageous lines of thought. If it were nothing more than because you stand fearlessly in the open and take up the cause of an injured man—

*Hov.* Especially when that injured man is—ahem!—I don't rightly know how to—

*Petra.* When that man is so upright and so honest, you mean?

*Hov.* [*more gently*]. Especially when he is your father, I meant.

*Petra.* [*suddenly checked*]. *That?*

*Hov.* Yes, Petra—Miss Petra.

*Petra.* Is it *that*, that is first and foremost with you? Not the matter itself? Not the truth?—not my father's big generous heart?

*Hov.* Certainly—of course—that too.

*Petra.* No, thank you; you have betrayed yourself, Mr. Hovstad, and now I shall never trust you again in anything.

*Hov.* Can you really take it so amiss in me that it is mostly for your sake—?

*Petra.* What I am angry with you for, is for not having been honest with my father. You talked to him as if the truth and the good of the community were what lay nearest to your heart. You have made fools of both my father and me. You are not the man you made yourself out to be. And that I shall never forgive you—never!

*Hov.* You ought not to speak so bitterly, Miss Petra—least of all now.

*Petra.* Why not now, especially?

*Hov.* Because your father cannot do without my help.

*Petra* [*looking him up and down*]. Are you that sort of man too? For shame!

*Hov.* No, no, I am not. This came upon me so unexpectedly—you must believe that.

*Petra.* I know what to believe. Good-bye.

*Asl.* [*coming from the printing-room hurriedly and with an air of mystery*]. Damnation, Hovstad!— [*Sees* PETRA.] Oh, this is awkward—

*Petra.* There is the book; you must give it to some one else. [*Goes towards the door.*]

*Hov.* [*following her*]. But, Miss Stockmann—

*Petra.* Good-bye. [*Goes out*

*Asl.* I say—Mr. Hovstad—

*Hov.* Well, well!—what is it?

*Asl.* The Mayor is outside in the printing-room.

*Hov.* The Mayor, did you say?

*Asl.* Yes, he wants to speak to you. He came in by the back door—didn't want to be seen, you understand.

*Hov.* What can he want? Wait a bit—I will go myself. [*Goes to the door of the printing-room, opens it, bows and invites* PETER STOCKMANN *in.*] Just see, Aslaksen, that no one—

*Asl.* Quite so.

[*Goes into the printing-room*

*Peter.* You did not expect to see me here, Mr. Hovstad?

*Hov.* No, I confess I did not.

*Peter* [*looking round*]. You are very snug in here—very nice indeed.

*Hov.* Oh—

*Peter.* And here I come, without any notice, to take up your time!

*Hov.* By all means, Mr. Mayor. I am at your service. But let me relieve you of your— [*Takes* STOCKMANN'S *hat and stick and puts them on a chair*]. Won't you sit down?

*Peter* [*sitting down by the table*]. Thank you. [HOVSTAD *sits down.*] I have had an extremely annoying experience to-day, Mr. Hovstad.

*Hov.* Really? Ah well, I expect with all the various business you have to attend to—

*Peter.* The Medical Officer of the Baths is responsible for what happened to-day.

*Hov.* Indeed? The Doctor?

*Peter.* He has addressed a kind of report to the Baths Committee on the subject of certain supposed defects in the Baths.

*Hov.* Has he indeed?

*Peter.* Yes—has he not told you? I thought he said—

*Hov.* Ah, yes—it is true he did mention something about—

*Asl.* [*coming from the printing-room*]. I ought to have that copy—

*Hov.* [*angrily*]. Ahem!—there it is on the desk.

*Asl.* [*taking it*]. Right.

*Peter.* But look there—that is the thing I was speaking of!

*Asl.* Yes, that is the Doctor's article, Mr. Mayor.

*Hov.* Oh, is *that* what you were speaking about?

*Peter.* Yes, that is it. What do you think of it?

*Hov.* Oh, I am only a layman—and I have only taken a very cursory glance at it.

*Peter.* But you are going to print it?

*Hov.* I cannot very well refuse a distinguished man—

*Asl.* I have nothing to do with editing the paper, Mr. Mayor—

*Peter.* I understand.

*Asl.* I merely print what is put into my hands.

*Peter.* Quite so.

*Asl.* And so I must—[*Moves off towards the printing-room.*]

*Peter.* No, but wait a moment, Mr. Aslaksen. You will allow me, Mr. Hovstad?

*Hov.* If you please, Mr. Mayor.

*Peter.* You are a discreet and thoughtful man, Mr. Aslaksen.

*Asl.* I am delighted to hear you think so, sir.

*Peter.* And a man of very considerable influence.

*Asl.* Chiefly among the small tradesmen, sir.

*Peter.* The small tax-payers are the majority—here as everywhere else.

*Asl.* That is true.

*Peter.* And I have no doubt you know the general trend of opinion among them, don't you?

*Asl.* Yes, I think I may say I do, Mr. Mayor.

*Peter.* Yes. Well, since there is such a praiseworthy spirit of self-sacrifice among the less wealthy citizens of our town—

*Asl.* What?

*Hov.* Self-sacrifice?

*Peter.* It is pleasing evidence of a public-spirited feeling, extremely pleasing evidence. I might almost say I hardly expected it. But you have a closer knowledge of public opinion than I.

*Asl.* But, Mr. Mayor—

*Peter.* And indeed it is no small sacrifice that the town is going to make.

*Hov.* The town?

*Asl.* But I don't understand. Is it the Baths—?

*Peter.* At a provisional estimate, the alterations that the Medical Officer asserts to be desirable will cost somewhere about twenty thousand pounds.

*Asl.* That is a lot of money, but—

*Peter.* Of course it will be necessary to raise a municipal loan.

*Hov.* [*getting up*]. Surely you never mean that the town must pay—?

*Asl.* Do you mean that it must come out of the municipal funds?—out of the ill-filled pockets of the small tradesmen?

*Peter.* Well, my dear Mr. Aslaksen, where else is the money to come from?

*Asl.* The gentlemen who own the Baths ought to provide that.

*Peter.* The proprietors of the Baths are not in a position to incur any further expense.

*Asl.* Is that absolutely certain, Mr. Mayor?

*Peter.* I have satisfied myself that it is so. If the town wants these very extensive alterations, it will have to pay for them.

*Asl.* But, damn it all—I beg your pardon—this is quite another matter, Mr. Hovstad!

*Hov.* It is, indeed.

*Peter.* The most fatal part of it is that we shall be obliged to shut the Baths for a couple of years.

*Hov.* Shut them? Shut them altogether?

*Asl.* For two years?

*Peter.* Yes, the work will take as long as that—at least.

*Asl.* I'm damned if we will stand that, Mr. Mayor! What are we householders to live upon in the meantime?

*Peter.* Unfortunately that is an extremely difficult question to answer, Mr. Aslaksen. But what would you have us do? Do you suppose we shall have a single visitor in the town, if we go about proclaiming that our water is polluted, that we are living over a plague spot, that the entire town—

*Asl.* And the whole thing is merely imagination?

*Peter.* With the best will in the world, I have not been able to come to any other conclusion.

*Asl.* Well then I must say it is absolutely unjustifiable of Dr. Stockmann—I beg your pardon, Mr. Mayor—

*Peter.* What you say is lamentably true, Mr. Aslaksen. My brother has unfortunately always been a headstrong man.

*Asl.* After this, do you mean to give him your support, Mr. Hovstad?

*Hov.* Can you suppose for a moment that I—?

*Peter.* I have drawn up a short *résumé* of the situation as it appears from a reasonable man's point of view. In it I have indicated how certain possible defects might suitably be remedied without outrunning the resources of the Baths Committee.

*Hov.* Have you got it with you, Mr. Mayor?

*Peter* [*fumbling in his pocket*]. Yes, I brought it with me in case you should—

*Asl.* Good Lord, there he is!

*Peter.* Who? My brother?

*Hov.* Where? Where?

*Asl.* He has just gone through the printing-room.

*Peter.* How unlucky! I don't want to meet him here, and I had still several things to speak to you about.

*Hov.* [*pointing to the door on the right*]. Go in there for the present.

*Peter.* But—?

*Hov.* You will only find Billing in there.

*Asl.* Quick, quick, Mr. Mayor—he is just coming.

*Peter.* Yes, very well; but see that you get rid of him quickly.

[*Goes out through the door on the right, which* Aslaksen *opens for him and shuts after him*

*Hov.* Pretend to be doing something, Aslaksen.

*Sits down and writes.* Aslaksen *begins foraging among a heap of newspapers that are lying on a chair.*

*Dr. Stock.* [*coming in from the printing-room*]. Here I am again. [*Puts down his hat and stick.*]

*Hov.* [*writing*]. Already, Doctor? Hurry up with what we were speaking about, Aslaksen. We are very pressed for time to-day.

*Dr. Stock.* [*to* Aslaksen]. No proof for me to see yet, I hear.

*Asl.* [*without turning round*]. You couldn't expect it yet, Doctor.

*Dr. Stock.* No, no; but I am impatient, as you can understand. I shall not know a moment's peace of mind till I see it in print.

*Hov.* Hm!—It will take a good while yet, won't it, Aslaksen?

*Asl.* Yes, I am almost afraid it will.

*Dr. Stock.* All right, my dear friends; I will come back. I do not mind coming back twice if necessary. A matter of such great importance—the welfare of the town at stake—it is no time to shirk trouble. [*Is just going, but stops and comes back.*] Look here—there is one thing more I want to speak to you about.

*Hov.* Excuse me, but could it not wait till some other time?

*Dr. Stock.* I can tell you in half a dozen words. It is only this. When my article is read to-morrow and it is realized that I have been quietly working the whole winter for the welfare of the town—

*Hov.* Yes but, Doctor—

*Dr. Stock.* I know what you are going to say. You don't see how on earth it was any more than my duty—my obvious duty as a citizen. Of course it wasn't; I know that as well as you. But my fellow citizens, you know—! Good Lord, think of all the good souls who think so highly of me—!

*Asl.* Yes, our townsfolk have had a very high opinion of you so far, Doctor.

*Dr. Stock.* Yes, and that is just why I am afraid they— Well, this is the point; when this reaches them, especially the poorer classes, and sounds in their ears like a summons to take the town's affairs into their own hands for the future—

*Hov.* [*getting up.*] Ahem! Doctor, I won't conceal from you the fact—

*Dr. Stock.* Ah!—I knew there was something in the wind! But I won't hear a word of it. If anything of that sort is being set on foot—

*Hov.* Of what sort?

*Dr. Stock.* Well, whatever it is—whether it is a demonstration in my honour, or a banquet, or a subscription list for some presentation to me—whatever it is, you must promise me solemnly and faithfully to put a stop to it. You too, Mr. Aslaksen; do you understand?

*Hov.* You must forgive me, Doctor, but sooner or later we must tell you the plain truth—

*He is interrupted by the entrance of* Mrs. Stockmann, *who comes in from the street door*

*Mrs. Stock.* [*seeing her husband*]. Just as I thought!

*Hov.* [*going towards her*]. You too, Mrs. Stockmann?

*Dr. Stock.* What on earth do *you* want here, Katherine?

*Mrs. Stock.* I should think you know very well what I want.

*Hov.* Won't you sit down? Or perhaps—

*Mrs. Stock.* No, thank you; don't trouble. And you must not be offended at my coming to fetch my husband; I am the mother of three children, you know.

*Dr. Stock.* Nonsense!—we know all about that.

*Mrs. Stock.* Well, one would not give you credit for much thought for your wife and children to-day; if you had had that, you would not have gone and dragged us all into misfortune.

*Dr. Stock.* Are you out of your senses, Katherine! Because a man has a wife and children, is he not to be allowed to proclaim the truth—is he not to be allowed to be an actively useful citizen—is he not to be allowed to do a service to his native town!

*Mrs. Stock.* Yes, Thomas—in reason.

*Asl.* Just what I say. Moderation in everything.

*Mrs. Stock.* And that is why you wrong us, Mr. Hovstad, in enticing my husband away from his home and making a dupe of him in all this.

*Hov.* I certainly am making a dupe of no one—

*Dr. Stock.* Making a dupe of me! Do you suppose *I* should allow myself to be duped!

*Mrs. Stock.* It is just what you do. I know quite well you have more brains than anyone in the town, but you are extremely easily duped, Thomas. [*To* Hovstad.] Please to realise that he loses his post at the Baths if you print what he has written—

*Asl.* What!

*Hov.* Look here, Doctor—

*Dr. Stock.* [*laughing*]. Ha—ha!—just let them try! No, no—they will take good care not to. I have got the compact majority behind me, let me tell you!

*Mrs. Stock.* Yes, that is just the worst of it—your having any such horrid thing behind you.

*Dr. Stock.* Rubbish, Katherine!—Go home and look after your house and leave me to look after the community. How can you be so afraid, when I am so confident and happy? [*Walks up and down, rubbing his hands.*] Truth and the People will win the fight, you may be certain! I see the whole of the broad-minded middle class marching like a victorious army—! [*Stops beside a chair.*] What the deuce is that lying there?

*Asl.* Good Lord!

*Hov.* Ahem!

*Dr. Stock.* Here we have the topmost pinnacle of authority!

*Takes the Mayor's official hat carefully between his finger-tips and holds it up in the air.*

*Mrs. Stock.* The Mayor's hat!

*Dr. Stock.* And here is the staff of office too. How in the name of all that's wonderful—?

*Hov.* Well, you see—

*Dr. Stock.* Oh, I understand. He has been here trying to talk you over. Ha—ha!—he made rather a mistake there! And as soon as he caught sight of me in the printing-room—. [*Bursts out laughing.*] Did he run away, Mr. Aslaksen?

*Asl.* [*hurriedly*]. Yes, he ran away, Doctor.

*Dr. Stock.* Ran away without his stick or his—. Fiddlesticks! Peter doesn't run away and leave his belongings behind him. But what the deuce have you done with him? Ah!—in there, of course. Now you shall see, Katherine!

*Mrs. Stock.* Thomas—please don't—!

*Asl.* Don't be rash, Doctor.

Dr. Stockmann *has put on the Mayor's hat and taken his stick in his hand. He goes up to the door, opens it, and stands with his hand to his hat at the salute.* Peter Stockmann *comes in, red with anger.* Billing *follows him.*

*Peter.* What does this tomfoolery mean?

*Dr. Stock.* Be respectful, my good Peter. I am the chief authority in the town now. [*Walks up and down.*]

*Mrs. Stock.* [*almost in tears*]. Really, Thomas!

*Peter* [*following him about*]. Give me my hat and stick.

*Dr. Stock.* [*in the same tone as before*]. If you are chief constable, let me tell you that I am the Mayor—I am the master of the whole town, please understand!

*Peter.* Take off my hat, I tell you. Remember it is part of an official uniform.

*Dr. Stock.* Pooh! Do you think the newly awakened lion-hearted people are going to be frightened by an official hat? There is going to be a revolution in the town to-morrow, let me tell you. You thought you could turn me out; but now I shall turn you out—turn you out of all your various offices. Do you think I cannot? Listen to me. I have triumphant social forces behind me. Hovstad and Billing will thunder in the *People's Messenger*, and Aslaksen will take the field at the head of the whole Householders' Association—

*Asl.* That I won't, Doctor.

*Dr. Stock.* Of course you will—

*Peter.* Ah!—may I ask then if Mr. Hovstad intends to join this agitation.

*Hov.* No, Mr. Mayor.

*Asl.* No, Mr. Hovstad is not such a fool as to go and ruin his paper and himself for the sake of an imaginary grievance.

*Dr. Stock.* [*looking round him*]. What does this mean?

*Hov.* You have represented your case in a false light, Doctor, and therefore I am unable to give you my support.

*Bill.* And after what the Mayor was so kind as to tell me just now, I—

*Dr. Stock.* A false light! Leave that part of it to me. Only print my article; I am quite capable of defending it.

*Hov.* I am not going to print it. I cannot and will not and dare not print it.

*Dr. Stock.* You dare not? What nonsense!—you are the editor; and an editor controls his paper, I suppose!

*Asl.* No, it is the subscribers, Doctor.

*Peter.* Fortunately, yes.

*Asl.* It is public opinion—the enlightened public—householders and people of that kind; they control the newspapers.

*Dr. Stock.* [*composedly*]. And I have all these influences against me?

*Asl.* Yes, you have. It would mean the absolute ruin of the community if your article were to appear.

*Dr. Stock.* Indeed.

*Peter.* My hat and stick, if you please. [Dr. Stockmann *takes off the hat and lays it on the table with the stick.* Peter Stockmann *takes them up.*] Your authority as mayor has come to an untimely end.

*Dr. Stock.* We have not got to the end yet. [*To* Hovstad.] Then it is quite impossible for you to print my article in the *People's Messenger?*

*Hov.* Quite impossible—out of regard for your family as well.

*Mrs. Stock.* You need not concern yourself about his family, thank you, Mr. Hovstad.

*Peter* [*taking a paper from his pocket*]. It will be sufficient, for the guidance of the public, if this appears. It is an official statement. May I trouble you?

*Hov.* [*taking the paper*]. Certainly; I will see that it is printed.

*Dr. Stock.* But not mine. Do you imagine that you can silence me and stifle the truth! You will not find it so easy as you suppose. Mr. Aslaksen, kindly take my manuscript at once and print it as a pamphlet—at my expense. I will have four hundred copies—no, five—six hundred.

*Asl.* If you offered me its weight in gold, I could not lend my press for any such purpose, Doctor. It would be flying in the face of public opinion. You will not get it printed anywhere in the town.

*Dr. Stock.* Then give it me back.

*Hov.* [*giving him the MS.*] Here it is.

*Dr. Stock.* [*taking his hat and stick*]. It shall be made public all the same. I will read it out at a mass meeting of the townspeople. All my fellow-citizens shall hear the voice of truth!

*Peter.* You will not find any public body in the town that will give you the use of their hall for such a purpose.

*Asl.* Not a single one, I am certain.

*Bill.* No, I'm damned if you will find one.

*Mrs. Stock.* But this is too shameful! Why should every one turn against you like that?

*Dr. Stock.* [*angrily*]. I will tell you why. It is because all the men in this town are old women—like you; they all think of nothing but their families, and never of the community.

*Mrs. Stock.* [*putting her arm into his*]. Then I will show them that an—an old woman can be a man for once. I am going to stand by you, Thomas!

*Dr. Stock.* Bravely said, Katherine! It shall be made public—as I am a living soul! If I can't hire a hall, I shall hire a drum, and parade the town with it and read it at every street-corner.

*Peter.* You are surely not such an arrant fool as that!

*Dr. Stock.* Yes, I am.

*Asl.* You won't find a single man in the whole town to go with you.

*Bill.* No, I'm damned if you will.

*Mrs. Stock.* Don't give in, Thomas, I will tell the boys to go with you.

*Dr. Stock.* That is a splendid idea!

*Mrs. Stock.* Morten will be delighted; and Ejlif will do whatever he does.

*Dr. Stock.* Yes, and Petra!—and you too, Katherine!

*Mrs. Stock.* No, I won't do that; but I will stand at the window and watch you, that's what I will do.

*Dr. Stock.* [*puts his arms round her and kisses her*]. Thank you, my dear! Now you and I are going to try a fall,[1] my fine gentlemen! I am going to see whether a pack of cowards can succeed in gagging a patriot who wants to purify society! [*He and his wife go out by the street door*

*Peter.* [*shaking his head seriously*]. Now he has sent *her* out of her senses, too.

## ACT IV

*A big old-fashioned room in* Captain Horster's *house. At the back folding-doors, which are standing open, lead to an ante-room. Three windows in the left-hand wall. In the middle of the opposite wall a platform has been erected. On this is a small table with two candles, a water-bottle and glass, and a bell. The room is lit by lamps placed between the windows. In the foreground on the left there is a table with candles and a chair. To the right is a door and some chairs standing near it. The room is nearly filled with a crowd of townspeople of all sorts, a few women and schoolboys being amongst them. People are still streaming in from the back, and the room is soon filled.*

*1st Citizen* [*meeting another*]. Hullo, Lamstad! You here too?

*2nd Cit.* I go to every public meeting, I do.

*3rd. Cit.* Brought your whistle too, I expect!

*2nd Cit.* I should think so. Haven't you?

*3rd Cit.* Rather! And old Evensen said he was going to bring a cow-horn, he did.

*2nd Cit.* Good old Evensen!

*Laughter among the crowd.*

*4th Cit.* [*coming up to them*]. I say, tell me what is going on here to-night.

*2nd Cit.* Dr. Stockmann is going to deliver an address attacking the Mayor.

*4th Cit.* But the Mayor is his brother.

*1st Cit.* That doesn't matter; Dr. Stockmann's not the chap to be afraid.

*3rd Cit.* But he is in the wrong; it said so in the *People's Messenger.*

*2nd Cit.* Yes, I expect he must be in the wrong this time, because neither the Householders' Association nor the Citizen's Club would lend him their hall for his meeting.

*1st Cit.* He couldn't even get the loan of the hall at the Baths.

*2nd Cit.* No, I should think not.

*A Man in another part of the crowd.* I say—who are we to back up in this?

*Another Man* [*beside him*]. Watch Aslaksen, and do as he does.

*Bill.* [*pushing his way through the crowd, with a writing-case under his arm*]. Excuse me, gentlemen—do you mind letting me through? I am reporting for the *People's Messenger.* Thank you very much!

*He sits down at the table on the left.*

*A Workman.* Who was that?

*2nd Work.* Don't you know him? It's Billing, who writes for Aslaksen's paper.

Captain Horster *brings in* Mrs. Stockmann *and* Petra *through the door on the right.* Ejlif *and* Morten *follow them in*

*Hor.* I thought you might all sit here; you can slip out easily from here, if things get too lively.

*Mrs. Stock.* Do you think there will be a disturbance?

*Hor.* One can never tell—with such a crowd. But sit down, and don't be uneasy.

---

[1] try a fall: try a bout at wrestling.

*Mrs. Stock.* [*sitting down*]. It was extremely kind of you to offer my husband the room.

*Hor.* Well, if nobody else would—

*Petra* [*who has sat down beside her mother*]. And it was a plucky thing to do, Captain Horster.

*Hor.* Oh, it is not such a great matter as all that.

HOVSTAD *and* ASLAKSEN *make their way through the crowd*

*Asl.* [*going up to* HORSTER]. Has the Doctor not come yet?

*Hor.* He is waiting in the next room.

*Movement in the crowd by the door at the back.*

*Hov.* Look—here comes the Mayor!

*Bill.* Yes, I'm damned if he hasn't come after all!

PETER STOCKMANN *makes his way gradually through the crowd, bows courteously, and takes up a position by the wall on the left. Shortly afterwards* DR. STOCKMANN *comes in by the right-hand door. He is dressed in a black frock-coat, with a white tie. There is a little feeble applause, which is hushed down. Silence is obtained*

*Dr. Stock.* [*in an undertone*]. How do you feel, Katherine?

*Mrs. Stock.* All right, thank you. [*Lowering her voice.*] Be sure not to lose your temper, Thomas.

*Dr. Stock.* Oh, I know how to control myself. [*Looks at his watch, steps on to the platform, and bows.*] It is a quarter past—so I will begin. [*Takes his MS. out of his pocket.*]

*Asl.* I think we ought to elect a chairman first.

*Dr. Stock.* No, it is quite unnecessary.

*Some of the Crowd.* Yes—yes!

*Peter.* I certainly think too that we ought to have a chairman.

*Dr. Stock.* But I have called this meeting to deliver a lecture, Peter.

*Peter.* Dr. Stockmann's lecture may possibly lead to a considerable conflict of opinion.

*Voices in the Crowd.* A chairman! A chairman!

*Hov.* The general wish of the meeting seems to be that a chairman should be elected.

*Dr. Stock.* [*restraining himself*]. Very well—let the meeting have its way.

*Asl.* Will the Mayor be good enough to undertake the task?

*Three men* [*clapping their hands*]. Bravo! Bravo!

*Peter.* For various reasons, which you will easily understand, I must beg to be excused. But fortunately we have amongst us a man who I think will be acceptable to you all. I refer to the President of the Householder's Association, Mr. Aslaksen.

*Several voices.* Yes—Aslaksen! Bravo, Aslaksen!

DR. STOCKMANN *takes up his MS. and walks up and down the platform.*

*Asl.* Since my fellow-citizens choose to entrust me with this duty, I cannot refuse.

*Loud applause.* ASLAKSEN *mounts the platform.*

*Bill.* [*writing*]. "Mr. Aslaksen was elected with enthusiasm."

*Asl.* And now, as I am in this position, I should like to say a few brief words. I am a quiet and peaceable man, who believes in discreet moderation, and—and—in moderate discretion. All my friends can bear witness to that.

*Several Voices.* That's right! That's right, Aslaksen!

*Asl.* I have learnt in the school of life and experience that moderation is the most valuable virtue a citizen can possess—

*Peter.* Hear, hear!

*Asl.*—And moreover that discretion and moderation are what enable a man to be of most service to the community. I would therefore suggest to our esteemed fellow-citizen, who has called this meeting, that he should strive to keep strictly within the bounds of moderation.

*A Man by the door.* Three cheers for the Moderation Society!

*A Voice.* Shame!

*Several Voices.* Sh!—Sh!

*Asl.* No interruptions, gentlemen, please! Does anyone wish to make any remarks?

*Peter.* Mr. Chairman.

*Asl.* The Mayor will address the meeting.

*Peter.* In consideration of the close relationship in which, as you all know, I stand to the present Medical Officer of the Baths, I should have preferred not to speak this evening. But my official position with regard to the Baths and my solicitude for the vital interests of the town compel me to bring forward a motion. I venture to presume that there is not a single one of our citizens present who considers it desirable that unreliable and exaggerated accounts of the sanitary condition of the Baths and the town should be spread abroad.

*Several Voices.* No, no! Certainly not! We protest against it!

*Peter.* Therefore I should like to propose that the meeting should not permit the Medical Officer either to read or to comment on his proposed lecture.

*Dr. Stock.* [*impatiently*]. Not permit—! What the devil—!

*Mrs. Stock.* [*coughing*]. Ahem!—ahem!

*Dr. Stock.* [*collecting himself*]. Very well. Go ahead!

*Peter.* In my communication to the *People's Messenger*, I have put the essential facts before the public in such a way that every fair-minded citizen can easily form his own opinion. From it you will see that the main result of the Medical Officer's proposals—apart from their constituting a vote of censure on the leading men of the town—would be to saddle the rate-payers with an unnecessary expenditure of at least some thousands of pounds.

*Sounds of disapproval among the audience, and some cat-calls.*

*Asl.* [*ringing his bell*]. Silence, please, gentlemen! I beg to support the Mayor's motion. I quite agree with him that there is something behind this agitation started by the Doctor. He talks about the Baths; but it is a revolution he is aiming at—he wants to get the administration of the town put into new hands. No one doubts the honesty of the Doctor's intentions—no one will suggest that there can be any two opinions as to that. I myself am a believer in self-government for the people, provided it does not fall too heavily on the rate-payers. But that would be the case here; and that is why I will see Dr. Stockmann damned—I beg your pardon—before I go with him in the matter. You can pay too dearly for a thing sometimes; that is my opinion.

*Loud applause on all sides.*

*Hov.* I, too, feel called upon to explain my position. Dr. Stockmann's agitation appeared to be gaining a certain amount of sympathy at first, so I supported it as impartially as I could. But presently we had reason to suspect that we had allowed ourselves to be misled by misrepresentation of the state of affairs—

*Dr. Stock.* Misrepresentation—!

*Hov.* Well, let us say a not entirely trustworthy representation. The Mayor's statement has proved that. I hope no one here has any doubts as to my liberal principles; the attitude of the *People's Messenger* towards important political questions is well known to every one. But the advice of experienced and thoughtful men has convinced me that in purely local matters a newspaper ought to proceed with a certain caution.

*Asl.* I entirely agree with the speaker.

*Hov.* And, in the matter before us, it is now an undoubted fact that Dr. Stockmann has public opinion against him. Now, what is an editor's first and most obvious duty, gentlemen? Is it not to work in harmony with his readers? Has he not received a sort of tacit mandate to work persistently and assiduously for the welfare of those whose opinions he represents? Or is it possible I am mistaken in that?

*Voices from the crowd.* No, no! You are quite right!

*Hov.* It has cost me a severe struggle to break with a man in whose house I have been lately a frequent guest—a man who till to-day has been able to pride himself on the undivided goodwill of his fellow-citizens—a man whose only, or at all events whose essential, failing is that he is swayed by his heart rather than his head.

*A few scattered voices.* That is true! Bravo, Stockmann!

*Hov.* But my duty to the community obliged me to break with him. And there is another consideration that impels me to oppose him, and, as far as possible, to arrest him on the perilous course he has adopted; that is, consideration for his family—

*Dr. Stock.* Please stick to the water-supply and drainage!

*Hov.* —consideration, I repeat, for his wife and his children for whom he had made no provision.

*Mort.* Is that us, mother?

*Mrs. Stock.* Hush!

*Asl.* I will now put the Mayor's proposition to the vote.

*Dr. Stock.* There is no necessity! To-night I have no intention of dealing with all that filth down at the Baths. No; I have something quite different to say to you.

*Peter* [*aside*]. What is coming now?

*A Drunken Man* [*by the entrance door*]. I am a rate-payer! And therefore I have a right to speak too! And my entire—firm—inconceivable opinion is—

*A number of voices.* Be quiet, at the back there!

*Others.* He is drunk! Turn him out!

[*They turn him out*

*Dr. Stock.* Am I allowed to speak?

*Asl.* [*ringing his bell*]. Dr. Stockmann will address the meeting.

*Dr. Stock.* I should like to have seen anyone, a few days ago, dare to attempt to silence me as has been done to-night! I would have defended my sacred rights as a man, like a lion. But now it is all one to me; I have something of even weightier importance to say to you.

*The crowd presses near to him,* Morten Kiil *conspicuous among them.*

*Dr. Stock.* [*continuing*]. I have thought and pondered a great deal, these last few days—pondered over such a variety of things that in the end my head seemed too full to hold them—

*Peter* [*with a cough*]. Ahem!

*Dr. Stock.* —but I got them clear in my mind at last, and then I saw the whole situation lucidly. And that is why I am standing here to-night. I have a great revelation to make to you, my fellow citizens. I will impart to you a discovery of a far wider scope than the trifling matter that our water-supply is poisoned and our medicinal Baths are standing on pestiferous soil.

*A number of voices* [*shouting*]. Don't talk about the Baths! We won't hear you! None of that!

*Dr. Stock.* I have already told you that what I want to speak about is the great discovery I have made lately—the discovery that all the sources of our *moral* life are poisoned and that the whole fabric of our civic community is founded on the pestiferous soil of falsehood.

*Voices of disconcerted Citizens.* What is that he says?

*Peter.* Such an insinuation—!

*Asl.* [*with his hand on his bell*]. I call upon the speaker to moderate his language.

*Dr. Stock.* I have always loved my native town as a man only can love the home of his youthful days. I was not old when I went away from here; and exile, longing, and memories cast as it were an additional halo over both the town and its inhabitants. [*Some clapping and applause.*] And there I stayed, for many years, in a horrible hole far away up north. When I came into contact with some of the people that lived scattered about among the rocks, I often thought it would have been more service to the poor half-starved creatures if a veterinary doctor had been sent up there, instead of a man like me.

*Murmurs among the crowd.*

*Bill.* [*laying down his pen*]. I'm damned if I have ever heard—!

*Hov.* It is an insult to a respectable population!

*Dr. Stock.* Wait a bit! I do not think anyone will charge me with having forgotten my native town up there. I was like one of the eider-ducks brooding on its nest, and what I hatched was—the plans for these Baths. [*Applause and protests.*] And then when fate at last decreed for me the great happiness of coming home again—I assure you, gentlemen, I thought I had nothing more in the world to wish for. Or rather, there was one thing I wished for—eagerly, untiringly, ardently—and that was to be able to be of service to my native town and the good of the community.

*Peter* [*looking at the ceiling*]. You chose a strange way of doing it—ahem!

*Dr. Stock.* And so, with my eyes blinded to the real facts, I revelled in happiness. But yesterday morning—no, to be precise, it was yesterday afternoon—the eyes of my mind were opened wide, and the first thing I realized was the colossal stupidity of the authorities—.

*Uproar, shouts and laughter.* Mrs. Stockmann *coughs persistently.*

*Peter.* Mr. Chairman!

*Asl.* [*ringing his bell*]. By virtue of my authority—!

*Dr. Stock.* It is a petty thing to catch me up on a word, Mr. Aslaksen. What I mean is only that I got scent of the unbelievable piggishness our leading men had been responsible for down at the Baths. I can't stand leading men at any price!—I have had enough of such people in my time. They are like billy-goats in a young plantation; they do mischief everywhere. They stand in a free man's way, whichever way he turns, and what I should like best would be to see them exterminated like any other vermin—.

*Uproar.*

*Peter.* Mr. Chairman, can we allow such expressions to pass?

*Asl.* [*with his hand on his bell*]. Doctor—!

*Dr. Stock.* I cannot understand how it is that I have only now acquired a clear conception of what these gentry are, when I had almost daily before my eyes in this town such an excellent specimen of them—my brother Peter—slow-witted and hide-bound in prejudice.—

*Laughter, uproar and hisses.* Mrs. Stockmann *sits coughing assiduously.* Aslaksen *rings his bell violently.*

*The Drunken Man* [*who has got in again*]. Is it me he is talking about? My name's Petersen, all right—but devil take me if I—

*Angry Voices.* Turn out that drunken man! Turn him out.

[*He is turned out again*

*Peter.* Who was that person?

*1st Cit.* I don't know who he is, Mr. Mayor.

*2nd Cit.* He doesn't belong here.

*3rd Cit.* I expect he is a navvy from over at—[*the rest is inaudible*].

*Asl.* He had obviously had too much beer.— Proceed, Doctor; but please strive to be moderate in your language.

*Dr. Stock.* Very well, gentlemen, I will say no more about our leading men. And if anyone imagines, from what I have just said, that my object is to attack these people this evening, he is wrong—absolutely wide of the mark. For I cherish the comforting conviction that these parasites—all these venerable relics of a dying school of thought—are most admirably paving the way for their own extinction; they need no doctor's help to hasten their end. Nor is it folk of that kind who constitute the most pressing danger to the community. It is not they who are most instrumental in poisoning the sources of our moral life and infecting the ground on which we stand. It is not they who are the most dangerous enemies of truth and freedom amongst us.

*Shouts from all sides.* Who then? Who is it? Name! Name!

*Dr. Stock.* You may depend upon it I shall name them! That is precisely the great discovery I made yesterday. [*Raises his voice.*] The most dangerous enemy of truth and freedom amongst us is the compact majority—yes, the damned compact Liberal majority—that is it! Now you know!

*Tremendous uproar. Most of the crowd are shouting, stamping and hissing. Some of the older men among them exchange stolen glances and seem to be enjoying themselves.* Mrs. Stockmann *gets up, looking anxious.* Ejlif *and* Morten *advance threateningly upon some schoolboys who are playing pranks.* Aslaksen *rings his bell and begs for silence.* Hovstad *and* Billing *both talk at once, but are inaudible. At last quiet is restored.*

*Asl.* As chairman, I call upon the speaker to withdraw the ill-considered expressions he has just used.

*Dr. Stock.* Never, Mr. Aslaksen! It is the majority in our community that denies me my freedom and seeks to prevent my speaking the truth.

*Hov.* The majority always has right on its side.

*Bill.* And truth too, by God!

*Dr. Stock.* The majority *never* has right on its side. Never, I say! That is one of these social lies against which an independent, intelligent man must wage war. Who is it that constitute the majority of the population in a country? Is it the clever folk or the stupid? I don't imagine you will dispute the fact that at present the stupid people are in an absolutely overwhelming majority all the world over. But, good Lord!—you can never pretend that it is right that the stupid folks should govern the clever ones! [*Uproar and cries.*] Oh, yes—you can shout me down, I know! but you cannot answer me. The majority has *might* on its side—unfortunately; but *right* it has *not.* I am in the right—I and a few other scattered individuals. The minority is always in the right. [*Renewed uproar.*]

*Hov.* Aha!—so Dr. Stockmann has become an aristocrat since the day before yesterday!

*Dr. Stock.* I have already said that I don't intend to waste a word on the puny, narrow-chested, short-winded crew whom we are leaving astern. Pulsating life no longer concerns itself with them. I am thinking of the few, the scattered few amongst us, who have absorbed new and vigorous truths. Such men stand, as it were, at the outposts, so far ahead that the compact majority has not yet been able to come up with them; and there they are fighting for truths that are too newly-born into the world of consciousness to have any considerable number of people on their side as yet.

*Hov.* So the Doctor is a revolutionary now!

*Dr. Stock.* Good heavens—of course I am, Mr. Hovstad! I propose to raise a revolution against the lie that the majority has the monopoly of the truth. What sort of truths are they that the majority usually supports? They are truths that are of such advanced age that they are beginning to break up. And if a truth is as old as that, it is also in a fair way to become a lie, gentlemen. [*Laughter and mocking cries.*] Yes, believe me or not, as you like; but truths are by no means as long-lived as Methuselah—as some folk imagine. A normally constituted truth lives, let us say, as a rule seventeen or eighteen, or at most twenty years; seldom longer. But truths as aged as that are always worn frightfully thin, and nevertheless it is only then that the majority recognizes them and recommends them to the community as wholesome moral nourishment. There is no great nutritive value in that sort of fare, I can assure you; and, as a doctor, I ought to know. These "majority truths" are like last year's cured meat—like rancid, tainted ham; and they are the origin of the moral scurvy that is rampant in our communities.

*Asl.* It appears to me that the speaker is wandering a long way from his subject.

*Peter.* I quite agree with the Chairman.

*Dr. Stock.* Have you gone clean out of your senses, Peter? I am sticking as closely to my subject as I can; for my subject is precisely this, that it is the masses, the majority—this infernal compact majority—that poisons the sources of our moral life and infects the ground we stand on.

*Hov.* And all this because the great, broad-minded majority of the people is prudent enough to show deference only to well-ascertained and well-approved truths?

*Dr. Stock.* Ah, my good Mr. Hovstad, don't talk nonsense about well-ascertained truths! The truths of which the masses now approve are the very truths that the fighters at the outposts held to in the days of our grandfathers. We fighters at the outposts nowadays no longer approve of them; and I do not believe there is any other well-ascertained truth except this, that no community can live a healthy life if it is nourished only on such old marrowless truths.

*Hov.* But instead of standing there using vague generalities, it would be interesting if you would tell us what these old marrowless truths are, that we are nourished on.

*Applause from many quarters.*

*Dr. Stock.* Oh, I could give you a whole string of such abominations; but to begin with I will confine myself to one well-approved truth, which at bottom is a foul lie, but upon which nevertheless Mr. Hovstad and the *People's Messenger* and all the *Messenger's* supporters are nourished.

*Hov.* And that is—?

*Dr. Stock.* That is, the doctrine you have inherited from your forefathers and proclaim thoughtlessly far and wide—the doctrine that the public, the crowd, the masses, are the essential part of the population—that they constitute the People—that the common folk, the ignorant and incomplete element in the community, have the same right to pronounce judgment and to approve, to direct and to govern, as the isolated, intellectually superior personalities in it.

*Bill.* Well, damn me if ever I—

*Hov.* [*at the same time, shouting out*]. Fellow-citizens, take good note of that!

*A number of voices* [*angrily*]. Oho!—we are not the People! Only the superior folk are to govern, are they!

*A Workman.* Turn the fellow out, for talking such rubbish!

*Another.* Out with him!

*Another* [*calling out*]. Blow your horn, Evensen!

*A horn is blown loudly, amidst hisses and an angry uproar.*

*Dr. Stock.* [*when the noise has somewhat abated*]. Be reasonable! Can't you stand hearing the voice of truth for once? I don't in the least expect you to agree with me all at once; but I must say I did expect Mr. Hovstad to admit I was right, when he had recovered his composure a little. He claims to be a freethinker—

*Voices* [*in murmurs of astonishment*]. Freethinker, did he say? Is Hovstad a freethinker?

*Hov.* [*shouting*]. Prove it, Dr. Stockmann! When have I said so in print?

*Dr. Stock.* [*reflecting*]. No, confound it, you are right!—you have never had the courage to. Well, I won't put you in a hole, Mr. Hovstad. Let us say it is I that am the freethinker, then. I am going to prove to you, scientifically, that the *People's Messenger* leads you by the nose in a shameful manner when it tells you that you—that the common people, the crowd, the masses, are the real essence of the People. That is only a newspaper lie, I tell you! The common people are nothing more than the raw material of which a People is made. [*Groans, laughter and uproar.*] Well, isn't that the case? Isn't there an enormous difference between a well-bred and an ill-bred strain of animals? Take, for instance, a common barn-door hen. What sort of eating do you get from a shrivelled up old scrag of a fowl like that? Not much, do you! And what sort of eggs does it lay? A fairly good crow or a raven can lay pretty nearly as good an egg. But take a well-bred Spanish or Japanese hen, or a good pheasant or a turkey—then you will see the difference. Or take the case of dogs, with whom we humans are on such intimate terms. Think first of an ordinary common cur—I mean one of the horrible, coarse-haired, low-bred curs that do nothing but run about the streets and befoul the walls of the houses. Compare one of these curs with a poodle whose sires for many generations have been bred in a gentleman's house, where they have had the best of food and had the opportunity of hearing soft voices and music. Do you not think that the poodle's brain is developed to quite a different degree from that of the cur? Of course it is. It is puppies of well-bred poodles like that, that showmen train to do incredibly clever tricks—things that a common cur could never learn to do even if it stood on its head.

*Uproar and mocking cries.*

*A Cit.* [*calls out*]. Are you going to make out we are dogs, now?

*Another Cit.* We are not animals, Doctor!

*Dr. Stock.* Yes but, bless my soul, we *are*, my friend! It is true we are the finest animals anyone could wish for; but, even amongst us, exceptionally fine animals are rare. There is a tremendous difference between poodle-men and cur-men. And the amusing part of it is, that Mr. Hovstad quite agrees with me as long as it is a question of four-footed animals—

*Hov.* Yes, it is true enough as far as they are concerned.

*Dr. Stock.* Very well. But as soon as I extend the principle and apply it to two-legged animals, Mr. Hovstad stops short. He no longer dares to think independently, or to pursue his ideas to their logical conclusion; so he turns the whole theory upside down and proclaims in the *People's Messenger* that it is the barn-door hens and street curs that are the finest specimens in the menagerie. But that is always the way, as long as a man retains the traces of common origin and has not worked his way up to intellectual distinction.

*Hov.* I lay no claim to any sort of distinction. I am the son of humble countryfolk, and I am proud that the stock I come from is rooted deep among the common people he insults.

*Voices.* Bravo, Hovstad! Bravo! Bravo!

*Dr. Stock.* The kind of common people I mean are not only to be found low down in the social scale; they crawl and swarm all around us—even in the highest social positions. You have only to look at your own fine, distinguished Mayor! My brother Peter is every bit as plebeian as anyone that walks in two shoes.

*Laughter and hisses.*

*Peter.* I protest against personal allusions of this kind.

*Dr. Stock.* [*imperturbably*].—and that, not because he is, like myself, descended from some old rascal of a pirate from Pomerania[1] or thereabouts — because that is who we are descended from—

*Peter.* An absurd legend. I deny it!

*Dr. Stock.* —but because he thinks what his superiors think and holds the same opinions as they. People who do that are, intellectually speaking, common people; and that is why my magnificent brother Peter is in reality so very far from any distinction—and consequently also so far from being liberal-minded.

*Peter.* Mr. Chairman—!

*Hov.* So it is only the distinguished men that are liberal-minded in this country? We are learning something quite new!

*Laughter.*

*Dr. Stock.* Yes, that is part of my new discovery too. And another part of it is that broad-mindedness is almost precisely the same thing as morality. That is why I maintain that it is absolutely inexcusable in the *People's Messenger* to proclaim, day in and day out, the false doctrine that it is the masses, the crowd, the compact majority, that have the monopoly of broad-mindedness and morality—and that vice and corruption and every kind of intellectual depravity are the result of culture, just as all the filth that is draining into our Baths is the result of the tanneries up at Mölledal! [*Uproar and interruptions.* Dr. Stockmann *is undisturbed, and goes on, carried away by his ardour, with a smile.*] And yet this same *People's Messenger* can go on preaching that the masses ought to be elevated to higher conditions of life! But, bless my soul, if the *Messenger's* teaching is to be depended upon, this very raising up the masses would mean nothing more or less than setting them straightway upon the paths of depravity! Happily the theory that culture demoralizes is only an old falsehood that our forefathers believed in and we have inherited. No, it is ignorance, poverty, ugly conditions of life, that do the devil's work! In a house which does not get aired and swept every day—my wife Katherine maintains that the floor ought to be scrubbed as well, but that is a debatable question—in such a house, let me tell you, people will lose within two or three years the power of thinking or acting in a moral manner. Lack of oxygen weakens the conscience. And there must be a plentiful lack of oxygen in very many houses in this town, I should think, judging from the fact that the whole compact majority can be unconscientious enough to wish to build the town's prosperity on a quagmire of falsehood and deceit.

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[1] Pomerania; a province of Germany on the Baltic sea.

*Asl.* We cannot allow such a grave accusation to be flung at a citizen community.

*A Cit.* I move that the Chairman direct the speaker to sit down.

*Voices* [*angrily*]. Hear, hear! Quite right! Make him sit down!

*Dr. Stock.* [*losing his self-control*]. Then I will go and shout the truth at every street corner! I will write it in other towns' newspapers! The whole country shall know what is going on here!

*Hov.* It almost seems as if Dr. Stockmann's intention were to ruin the town.

*Dr. Stock.* Yes, my native town is so dear to me that I would rather ruin it than see it flourishing upon a lie.

*Asl.* This is really serious.

*Uproar and catcalls.* MRS. STOCKMANN *coughs, but to no purpose; her husband does not listen to her any longer.*

*Hov.* [*shouting above the din*]. A man must be a public enemy to wish to ruin a whole community!

*Dr. Stock.* [*with growing fervor*]. What does the destruction of a community matter, if it lives on lies! It ought to be razed to the ground, I tell you! All who live by lies ought to be exterminated like vermin! You will end by infecting the whole country; you will bring about such a state of things that the whole country will deserve to be ruined. And if things come to that pass, I shall say from the bottom of my heart: Let the whole country perish, let all these people be exterminated!

*Voices from the crowd.* That is talking like an out-and-out enemy of the people!

*Bill.* There sounded the voice of the people, by all that's holy!

*The whole crowd* [*shouting*]. Yes, yes! He is an enemy of the people! He hates his country! He hates his own people!

*Asl.* Both as a citizen and as an individual, I am profoundedly disturbed by what we have had to listen to. Dr. Stockmann has shown himself in a light I should never have dreamed of. I am unhappily obliged to subscribe to the opinion which I have just heard my estimable fellow-citizens utter; and I propose that we should give expression to that opinion in a resolution. I propose a resolution as follows: "This meeting declares that it considers Dr. Thomas Stockmann, Medical Officer of the Baths, to be an enemy of the people."

*A storm of cheers and applause. A number of men surround the* DOCTOR *and hiss him.* MRS. STOCKMANN *and* PETRA *have got up from their seats.* MORTEN *and* EJLIF *are fighting the other schoolboys for hissing; some of their elders separate them.*

*Dr. Stock.* [*to the men who are hissing him*]. Oh, you fools! I tell you that—

*Asl.* [*ringing his bell*]. We cannot hear you now, Doctor. A formal vote is about to be taken; but, out of regard for personal feelings, it shall be by ballot and not verbal. Have you any clean paper, Mr. Billing?

*Bill.* I have both blue and white here.

*Asl.* [*going to him*]. That will do nicely; we shall get on more quickly that way. Cut it up into small strips—yes, that's it. [*To the meeting.*] Blue means no; white means yes. I will come round myself and collect votes. [PETER STOCKMANN *leaves the hall.* ASLAKSEN *and one or two others go round the room with the slips of paper in their hats.*]

*1st Cit.* [*to* HOVSTAD]. I say, what has come to the Doctor? What are we to think of it?

*Hov.* Oh, you know how headstrong he is.

*2nd Cit.* [*to* BILLING]. Billing, you go to their house—have you ever noticed if the fellow drinks?

*Bill.* Well I'm hanged if I know what to say. There are always spirits on the table when you go.

*3rd Cit.* I rather think he goes quite off his head sometimes.

*1st Cit.* I wonder if there is any madness in his family?

*Bill.* I shouldn't wonder if there were.

*4th Cit.* No, it is nothing more than sheer malice; he wants to get even with somebody for something or other.

*Bill.* Well certainly he suggested a raise in his salary on one occasion lately, and did not get it.

*The Citizens* [*together*]. Ah!—then it is easy to understand how it is!

*The Drunken Man* [*who has got amongst the audience again*]. I want a blue one, I do! And I want a white one too!

*Voices.* It's that drunken chap again! Turn him out!

*Kiil* [*going up to* DR. STOCKMANN]. Well, Stockmann, do you see what these monkey tricks of yours lead to?

*Dr. Stock.* I have done my duty.

*Kiil.* What was that you said about the tanneries at Mölledal?

*Dr. Stock.* You heard well enough. I said they were the source of all the filth.

*Kiil.* My tannery too?

*Dr. Stock.* Unfortunately your tannery is by far the worst.

*Kiil.* Are you going to put that in the papers?

*Dr. Stock.* I shall conceal nothing.

*Kiil.* That may cost you dear, Stockmann. [*Goes out*

*A Stout Man* [*going up to* CAPTAIN HORSTER, *without taking any notice of the ladies*]. Well, Captain, so you lend your house to enemies of the people?

*Hor.* I imagine I can do what I like with my own possessions, Mr. Vik.

*The Stout Man.* Then you can have no objection to my doing the same with mine.

*Hor.* What do you mean, sir?

*The Stout Man.* You shall hear from me in the morning.

[*Turns his back on him and moves off*

*Petra.* Was that not your owner, Captain Horster?

*Hor.* Yes, that was Mr. Vik the shipowner.

*Asl.* [*with the voting-papers in his hands, gets up on to the platform and rings his bell*]. Gentlemen, allow me to announce the result. By the votes of every one here except one person—

*A Young Man.* That is the drunk chap!

*Asl.* By the votes of every one here except a tipsy man, this meeting of citizens declares Dr. Thomas Stockmann to be an enemy of the people. [*Shouts and applause.*] Three cheers for our ancient and honourable citizen community! [*Renewed applause.*] Three cheers for our able and energetic Mayor, who has so loyally suppressed the promptings of family feeling! [*Cheers.*] The meeting is dissolved. [*Gets down.*]

*Bill.* Three cheers for the Chairman!

*The whole crowd.* Three cheers for Aslaksen! Hurrah!

*Dr. Stock.* My hat and coat, Petra! Captain, have you room on your ship for passengers to the New World?

*Hor.* For you and yours we will make room, Doctor.

*Dr. Stock.* [*as* PETRA *helps him into his coat*]. Good. Come, Katherine! Come, boys!

*Mrs. Stock.* [*in an undertone*]. Thomas, dear, let us go out by the back way.

*Dr. Stock.* No back ways for me, Katherine. [*Raising his voice.*] You will hear more of this enemy of the people, before he shakes the dust off his shoes upon you! I am not so forgiving as a certain Person; I do not say: "I forgive you, for ye know not what ye do."

*Asl.* [*shouting*]. That is a blasphemous comparison, Dr. Stockmann!

*Bill.* It is, by God! It's dreadful for an earnest man to listen to.

*A Coarse Voice.* Threatens us now, does he!

*Other Voices* [*excitedly*]. Let's go and break his windows! Duck him in the fjord!

*Another Voice.* Blow your horn, Evensen! Pip, pip!

*Horn-blowing, hisses, and wild cries.* DR. STOCKMANN *goes out through the hall with his family,* HORSTER *elbowing a way for them*

*The whole crowd* [*howling after them as they go*]. Enemy of the People! Enemy of the People!

*Bill.* [*as he puts his papers together*]. Well, I'm damned if I go and drink toddy with the Stockmanns tonight!

[*The crowd press towards the exit. The uproar continues outside; shouts of* "Enemy of the People!" *are heard from without.*

## ACT V

Dr. Stockmann's *study. Bookcases, and cabinets containing specimens, line the walls. At the back is a door leading to the hall; in the foreground on the left, a door leading to the sitting-room. In the right-hand wall are two windows, of which all the panes are broken. The* Doctor's *desk, littered with books and papers, stands in the middle of the room, which is in disorder. It is morning.* Dr. Stockmann *in dressing-gown, slippers and a smoking-cap, is bending down and raking with an umbrella under one of the cabinets. After a little while he rakes out a stone.*

*Dr. Stock.* [*calling through the open sitting-room door*]. Katherine, I have found another one.

*Mrs. Stock.* [*from the sitting-room*]. Oh, you will find a lot more yet, I expect.

*Dr. Stock.* [*adding the stone to a heap of others on the table*]. I shall treasure these stones as relics. Ejlif and Morten shall look at them every day, and when they are grown up they shall inherit them as heirlooms. [*Rakes about under a bookcase.*] Hasn't—what the deuce is her name?—the girl, you know—hasn't she been to fetch the glazier yet?

*Mrs. Stock.* [*coming in*]. Yes, but he said he didn't know if he would be able to come to-day.

*Dr. Stock.* You will see he won't dare to come.

*Mrs. Stock.* Well, that is just what Randine thought—that he didn't dare to, on account of the neighbours. [*Calls into the sitting room.*] What is it you want, Randine? Give it to me. [*Goes in, and comes out again directly.*] Here is a letter for you, Thomas.

*Dr. Stock.* Let me see it. [*Opens and reads it.*] Ah!—of course.

*Mrs. Stock.* Who is it from?

*Dr. Stock.* From the landlord. Notice to quit.

*Mrs. Stock.* Is it possible? Such a nice man—

*Dr. Stock.* [*looking at the letter*]. Does not dare do otherwise, he says. Doesn't like doing it, but dare not do otherwise—on account of his fellow-citizens—out of regard for public opinion. Is in a dependent position—dare not offend certain influential men—

*Mrs. Stock.* There, you see, Thomas!

*Dr. Stock.* Yes, yes, I see well enough; the whole lot of them in the town are cowards; not a man among them dares do anything for fear of the others. [*Throws the letter on to the table.*] But it doesn't matter to us, Katherine. We are going to sail away to the New World, and—

*Mrs. Stock.* But, Thomas, are you sure we are well advised to take this step?

*Dr. Stock.* Are you suggesting that I should stay here, where they have pilloried me as an enemy of the people—branded me—broken my windows! And just look here, Katherine—they have torn a great rent in my black trousers too!

*Mrs. Stock.* Oh, dear!—and they are the best pair you have got!

*Dr. Stock.* You should never wear your best trousers when you go out to fight for freedom and truth. It is not that I care so much about the trousers, you know; you can always sew them up again for me. But that the common herd should dare to make this attack on me, as if they were my equals—that is what I cannot, for the life of me, swallow!

*Mrs. Stock.* There is no doubt they have behaved very ill to you, Thomas; but is that sufficient reason for our leaving our native country for good and all?

*Dr. Stock.* If we went to another town, do you suppose we should not find the common people just as insolent as they are here? Depend upon it, there is not much to choose between them. Oh, well, let the curs snap—that is not the worst part of it. The worst is that, from one end of this country to the other, every man is the slave of his Party. Although, as far as that goes, I daresay it is not much better in the free West either; the compact majority, and liberal public opinion, and all that infernal old bag of tricks are probably rampant there too. But there things are done on a larger scale, you see. They may kill you, but they won't put you to death by slow torture. They don't squeeze a free man's soul in a vise, as they do here. And if need be, one can live in solitude. [*Walks up and down.*] If only I knew where there was a virgin forest or a small South Sea island for sale, cheap—

*Mrs. Stock.* But think of the boys, Thomas!

*Dr. Stock.* [*standing still*]. What a strange woman you are, Katherine! Would you prefer to have the boys grow up in a society like this? You saw for yourself last night that half the population are out of their minds; and if the other half have not lost their senses, it is because they are mere brutes, with no sense to lose.

*Mrs. Stock.* But, Thomas, dear, the imprudent things you said had something to do with it, you know.

*Dr. Stock.* Well, isn't what I said perfectly true? Don't they turn every idea topsy-turvy? Don't they make a regular hotch-potch of right and wrong? Don't they say that the things I know are true, are lies? The craziest part of it all is the fact of these "liberals," men of full age, going about in crowds imagining that they are the broad-minded party! Did you ever hear anything like it, Katherine!

*Mrs. Stock.* Yes, yes, it's mad enough of them, certainly; but— [Petra *comes in from the sitting-room*]. Back from school already?

*Petra.* Yes. I have been given notice of dismissal.

*Mrs. Stock.* Dismissal?

*Dr. Stock.* You too?

*Petra.* Mrs. Busk gave me my notice; so I thought it was best to go at once.

*Dr. Stock.* You were perfectly right, too!

*Mrs. Stock.* Who would have thought Mrs. Busk was a woman like that!

*Petra.* Mrs. Busk isn't a bit like that, mother; I saw quite plainly how it hurt her to do it. But she didn't dare do otherwise, she said; and so I got my notice.

*Dr. Stock.* [*laughing and rubbing his hands*]. She didn't dare do otherwise, either! It's delicious!

*Mrs. Stock.* Well, after the dreadful scenes last night—

*Petra.* It was not only that. Just listen to this, father!

*Dr. Stock.* Well?

*Petra.* Mrs. Busk showed me no less than three letters she received this morning—

*Dr. Stock.* Anonymous, I suppose?

*Petra.* Yes.

*Dr. Stock.* Yes, because they didn't dare to risk signing their names, Katherine!

*Petra.* And two of them were to the effect that a man, who has been our guest here, was declaring last night at the Club that my views on various subjects are extremely emancipated—

*Dr. Stock.* You did not deny that, I hope?

*Petra.* No, you know I wouldn't. Mrs. Busk's own views are tolerably emancipated, when we are alone together; but now that this report about me is being spread, she dare not keep me on any longer.

*Mrs. Stock.* And some one who had been a guest of ours! That shows you the return you get for your hospitality, Thomas!

*Dr. Stock.* We won't live in such a disgusting hole any longer. Pack up as quickly as you can, Katherine; the sooner we can get away, the better.

*Mrs. Stock.* Be quiet—I think I hear some one in the hall. See who it is, Petra.

*Petra* [*opening the door*]. Oh, it's you, Captain Horster! Do come in.

*Hor.* [*coming in*]. Good morning. I thought I would just come in and see how you were.

*Dr. Stock.* [*shaking his hand*]. Thanks —that is really kind of you.

*Mrs. Stock.* And thank you, too, for helping us through the crowd, Captain Horster.

*Petra.* How did you manage to get home again?

*Hor.* Oh, somehow or other. I am fairly strong, and there is more sound than fury about these folk.

*Dr. Stock.* Yes, isn't their swinish cowardice astonishing? Look here, I will show you something! There are all the stones they have thrown through my windows. Just look at them! I'm hanged if there are more than two decently large bits of hardstone in the whole heap; the rest are nothing but gravel—wretched little things. And yet they stood out there bawling and swearing that they would do me some violence; but as for *doing* anything—you don't see much of that in this town.

*Hor.* Just as well for you this time, doctor!

*Dr. Stock.* True enough. But it makes one angry all the same; because if some day it should be a question of a national fight in real earnest, you will see that public opinion will be in favour of taking to one's heels, and the compact majority will turn tail like a flock of sheep, Captain Horster. That is what is so mournful to think of; it gives me so much concern, that—. No, devil take it, it is ridiculous to care about it! They have called me an enemy of the people, so an enemy of the people let me be!

*Mrs. Stock.* You will never be that, Thomas.

*Dr. Stock.* Don't swear to that, Katherine. To be called an ugly name may have the same effect as a pin-scratch in the lung. And that hateful name—I can't get quit of it. It is sticking here in the pit of my stomach, eating into me like a corrosive acid. And no magnesia will remove it.

*Petra.* Bah!—you should only laugh at them, father.

*Hor.* They will change their minds some day, Doctor.

*Mrs. Stock.* Yes, Thomas, as sure as you are standing here.

*Dr. Stock.* Perhaps, when it is too late. Much good may it do them! They may wallow in their filth then and rue the day when they drove a patriot into exile. When do you sail, Captain Horster?

*Hors.* Hm!—that was just what I had come to speak about—

*Dr. Stock.* Why, has anything gone wrong with the ship?

*Hor.* No; but what has happened is that I am not to sail in it.

*Petra.* Do you mean that you have been dismissed from your command?

*Hor.* [*smiling*]. Yes, that's just it.

*Petra.* You too!

*Mrs. Stock.* There, you see, Thomas!

*Dr. Stock.* And that for the truth's sake! Oh, if I had thought such a thing possible—

*Hor.* You mustn't take it to heart; I shall be sure to find a job with some ship-owner or other, elsewhere.

*Dr. Stock.* And that is this man Vik—a wealthy man, independent of every one and everything—! Shame on him!

*Hor.* He is quite an excellent fellow otherwise; he told me himself he would willingly have kept me on, if only he had dared—

*Dr. Stock.* But he didn't dare? No, of course not.

*Hor.* It is not such an easy matter, he said, for a party man—

*Dr. Stock.* The worthy man spoke the truth. A party is like a sausage machine; it mashes up all sorts of heads together into the same mincemeat—fatheads and blockheads, all in one mash!

*Mrs. Stock.* Come, come, Thomas dear!

*Petra* [*to* Horster]. If only you had not come home with us, things might not have come to this pass.

*Hor.* I do not regret it.

*Petra* [*holding out her hand to him*]. Thank you for that!

*Hor.* [*to* Dr. Stockmann]. And so what I came to say was that if you are determined to go away, I have thought of another plan—

*Dr. Stock.* That's splendid!—if only we can get away at once.

*Mrs. Stock.* Hush!—wasn't that some one knocking?

*Petra.* That is uncle, surely.

*Dr. Stock.* Aha! [*Calls out.*] Come in!

*Mrs. Stock.* Dear Thomas, promise me definitely—

PETER STOCKMANN *comes in from the hall*

*Peter.* Oh, you are engaged. In that case, I will—

*Dr. Stock.* No, no, come in.

*Peter.* But I wanted to speak to you alone.

*Mrs. Stock.* We will go into the sitting-room in the meanwhile.

*Hor.* And I will look in again later.

*Dr. Stock.* No, go in there with them, Captain Horster; I want to hear more about—

*Hor.* Very well, I will wait, then.

[*He follows* MRS. STOCKMANN *and* PETRA *into the sitting-room*

*Dr. Stock.* I daresay you find it rather draughty here to-day. Put your hat on.

*Peter.* Thank you, if I may. [*Does so.*] I think I caught cold last night; I stood and shivered—

*Dr. Stock.* Really? I found it warm enough.

*Peter.* I regret that it was not in my power to prevent those excesses last night.

*Dr. Stock.* Have you anything particular to say to me besides that?

*Peter* [*taking a big letter from his pocket*]. I have this document for you, from the Baths Committee.

*Dr. Stock.* My dismissal?

*Peter.* Yes, dating from to-day. [*Lays the letter on the table.*] It gives us pain to do it; but, to speak frankly, we dared not do otherwise on account of public opinion.

*Dr. Stock.* [*smiling*]. Dared not? I seem to have heard that word before, to-day.

*Peter.* I must beg you to understand your position clearly. For the future you must not count on any practice whatever in the town.

*Dr. Stock.* Devil take the practice! But why are you so sure of that?

*Peter.* The Householders' Association is circulating a list from house to house. All right-minded citizens are being called upon to give up employing you; and I can assure you that not a single head of a family will risk refusing his signature. They simply dare not.

*Dr. Stock.* No, no; I don't doubt it. But what then?

*Peter.* If I might advise you, it would be best to leave the place for a little while—

*Dr. Stock.* Yes, the propriety of leaving the place *has* occurred to me.

*Peter.* Good. And then, when you have had six months to think things over, if, after mature consideration, you can persuade yourself to write a few words of regret, acknowledging your error—

*Dr. Stock.* I might have my appointment restored to me, do you mean?

*Peter.* Perhaps. It is not at all impossible.

*Dr. Stock.* But what about public opinion, then? Surely you would not dare to do it on account of public feeling.

*Peter.* Public opinion is an extremely mutable thing. And, to be quite candid with you, it is a matter of great importance to us to have some admission of that sort from you in writing.

*Dr. Stock.* Oh, that's what you are after, is it! I will just trouble you to remember what I said to you lately about foxy tricks of that sort!

*Peter.* Your position was quite different then. At that time you had reason to suppose you had the whole town at your back—

*Dr. Stock.* Yes, and now I feel I have the whole town *on* my back—[*flaring up*]. I would not do it if I had the devil and his dam on my back—! Never—never, I tell you!

*Peter.* A man with a family has no right to behave as you do. You have no right to do it, Thomas.

*Dr. Stock.* I have no right! There is only one single thing in the world a free man has no right to do. Do you know what that is?

*Peter.* No.

*Dr. Stock.* Of course you don't, but I will tell you. A free man has no right to soil himself with filth; he has no right to behave in a way that would justify his spitting in his own face.

*Peter.* This sort of thing sounds extremely plausible, of course; and if there were no other explanation for your obstinacy—. But as it happens that there is.

*Dr. Stock.* What do you mean?

*Peter.* You understand very well what I mean. But, as your brother and as a man of discretion, I advise you not to build too much upon expectations and prospects that may so very easily fail you.

*Dr. Stock.* What in the world is all this about?

*Peter.* Do you really ask me to believe that you are ignorant of the terms of Mr. Kiil's will?

*Dr. Stock.* I know that the small amount he possesses is to go to an institution for indigent old workpeople. How does that concern me?

*Peter.* In the first place, it is by no means a small amount that is in question. Mr. Kiil is a fairly wealthy man.

*Dr. Stock.* I had no notion of that!

*Peter.* Hm!—hadn't you really? Then I suppose you had no notion, either, that a considerable portion of his wealth will come to your children, you and your wife having a life-rent of the capital. Has he never told you so?

*Dr. Stock.* Never, on my honour! Quite the reverse; he has consistently done nothing but fume at being so unconscionably heavily taxed. But are you perfectly certain of this, Peter?

*Peter.* I have it from an absolutely reliable source.

*Dr. Stock.* Then, thank God, Katherine is provided for, —and the children too! I must tell her this at once—[*Calls out.*] Katherine, Katherine!

*Peter* [*restraining him*]. Hush, don't say a word yet!

*Mrs. Stock.* [*opening the door*]. What is the matter?

*Dr. Stock.* Oh, nothing, nothing; you can go back. [*She shuts the door.* Dr. Stockmann *walks up and down in his excitement.*] Provided for!—Just think of it, we are all provided for! And for life! What a blessed feeling it is to know one is provided for!

*Peter.* Yes, but that is just exactly what you are not. Mr. Kiil can alter his will any day he likes.

*Dr. Stock.* But he won't do that, my dear Peter. The "Badger" is much too delighted at my attack on you and your wise friends.

*Peter* [*starts and looks intently at him*]. Ah, that throws a light on various things.

*Dr. Stock.* What things?

*Peter.* I see that the whole thing was a combined manœuvre on your part and his. These violent, reckless attacks that you have made against the leading men of the town, under the pretence that it was in the name of truth—

*Dr. Stock.* What about them?

*Peter.* I see that they were nothing else than the stipulated price for that vindictive old man's will.

*Dr. Stock.* [*almost speechless*]. Peter —you are the most disgusting plebeian I have ever met in all my life.

*Peter.* All is over between us. Your dismissal is irrevocable—we have a weapon against you now. [*Goes out*

*Dr. Stock.* For shame! For shame! [*Calls out.*] Katherine, you must have the floor scrubbed after him! Let— what's her name—devil take it, the girl who has always got soot on her nose—

*Mrs. Stock.* [*in the sitting-room*]. Hush, Thomas, be quiet!

*Petra* [*coming to the door*]. Father, grandfather is here, asking if he may speak to you alone.

*Dr. Stock.* Certainly he may. [*Going to the door.*] Come in, Mr. Kiil. [Morten Kiil *comes in.* Dr. Stockmann *shuts the door after him.*] What can I do for you? Won't you sit down?

*Kiil.* I won't sit. [*Looks around.*] You look very comfortable here to-day, Thomas.

*Dr. Stock.* Yes, don't we!

*Kiil.* Very comfortable—plenty of fresh air. I should think you have got enough to-day of that oxygen you were talking about yesterday. Your conscience must be in splendid order to-day, I should think.

*Dr. Stock.* It is.

*Kiil.* So I should think. [*Taps his chest.*] Do you know what I have got here?

*Dr. Stock.* A good conscience, too, I hope.

*Kiil.* Bah!—No, it is something better than that.

*He takes a thick pocket-book from his breast-pocket, opens it, and displays a packet of papers.*

*Dr. Stock.* [*looking at him in astonishment*]. Shares in the Baths?

*Kiil.* They were not difficult to get to-day.

*Dr. Stock.* And you have been buying—?

*Kiil.* As many as I could pay for.

*Dr. Stock.* But, my dear Mr. Kiil—consider the state of the Baths' affairs!

*Kiil.* If you behave like a reasonable man, you can soon set the Baths on their feet again.

*Dr. Stock.* Well, you can see for yourself that I have done all I can, but—. They are all mad in this town!

*Kiil.* You said yesterday that the worst of this pollution came from my tannery. If that is true, then my grandfather and my father before me, and I myself, for many years past, have been poisoning the town like three destroying angels. Do you think I am going to sit quiet under that reproach?

*Dr. Stock.* Unfortunately I am afraid you will have to.

*Kiil.* No, thank you. I am jealous of my name and reputation. They call me "the Badger," I am told. A badger is a kind of pig, I believe; but I am not going to give them the right to call me that. I mean to live and die a clean man.

*Dr. Stock.* And how are you going to set about it?

*Kiil.* You shall cleanse me, Thomas.

*Dr. Stock.* I!

*Kiil.* Do you know what money I have bought these shares with? No, of course you can't know—but I will tell you. It is the money that Katherine and Petra and the boys will have when I am gone. Because I have been able to save a little bit after all, you know.

*Dr. Stock.* [*flaring up*]. And you have gone and taken Katherine's money for *this!*

*Kiil.* Yes, the whole of the money is invested in the Baths now. And now I just want to see whether you are quite stark, staring mad, Thomas! If you still make out that these animals and other nasty things of that sort come from my tannery, it will be exactly as if you were to flay broad strips of skin from Katherine's body, and Petra's and the boys'; and no decent man would do that—unless he were mad.

*Dr. Stock.* [*walking up and down*]. Yes, but I *am* mad; I *am* mad!

*Kiil.* You cannot be so absurdly mad as all that, when it is a question of your wife and children.

*Dr. Stock.* [*standing still in front of him*]. Why couldn't you consult me about it, before you went and bought all that trash?

*Kiil.* What is done cannot be undone.

*Dr. Stock.* [*walks about uneasily*]. If only I were not so certain about it—! But I am absolutely convinced that I am right.

*Kiil* [*weighing the pocket-book in his hand*]. If you stick to your mad idea, this won't be worth much, you know. [*Puts the pocket-book in his pocket.*]

*Dr. Stock.* But, hang it all! it might be possible for science to discover some prophylactic, I should think—or some antidote of some kind—

*Kiil.* To kill these animals, do you mean?

*Dr. Stock.* Yes, or to make them innocuous.

*Kiil.* Couldn't you try some rat's-bane?

*Dr. Stock.* Don't talk nonsense! They all say it is only imagination, you know. Well, let it go at that! Let them have their own way about it! Haven't the ignorant, narrow-minded curs reviled me as an enemy of the people?—and haven't they been ready to tear the clothes off my back too?

*Kiil.* And broken all your windows to pieces!

*Dr. Stock.* And then there is my duty to my family. I must talk it over with Katherine; she is great on those things.

*Kiil.* That is right; be guided by a reasonable woman's advice.

*Dr. Stock.* [*advancing towards him*]. To think you could do such a preposterous thing! Risking Katherine's money in this way, and putting me in such a horribly painful dilemma! When I look at you, I think I see the devil himself—.

*Kiil.* Then I had better go. But I must have an answer from you before two o'clock—yes or no. If it is no, the shares go to a charity, and that this very day.

*Dr. Stock.* And what does Katherine get?

*Kiil.* Not a halfpenny. [*The door leading to the hall opens, and* Hovstad *and* Aslaksen *make their appearance.*] Look at those two!

*Dr. Stock.* [*staring at them*]. What the devil!—have *you* actually the face to come into my house?

*Hov.* Certainly.

*Asl.* We have something to say to you, you see.

*Kiil* [*in a whisper*]. Yes or no—before two o'clock.

*Asl.* [*glancing at* Hovstad]. Aha!

[Morten Kiil *goes out*

*Dr. Stock.* Well, what do you want with me? Be brief.

*Hov.* I can quite understand that you are annoyed with us for our attitude at the meeting yesterday—

*Dr. Stock.* Attitude, do you call it? Yes, it was a charming attitude! I call it weak, womanish—damnably shameful!

*Hov.* Call it what you like, we could not do otherwise.

*Dr. Stock.* You *dared* not do otherwise—isn't that it?

*Hov.* Well, if you like to put it that way.

*Asl.* But why did you not let us have word of it beforehand?—just a hint to Mr. Hovstad or to me?

*Dr. Stock.* A hint? Of what?

*Asl.* Of what was behind it all.

*Dr. Stock.* I don't understand you in the least.

*Asl.* [*with a confidential nod*]. Oh yes, you do, Dr. Stockmann.

*Hov.* It is no good making a mystery of it any longer.

*Dr. Stock.* [*looking first at one of them and then at the other*]. What the devil do you both mean?

*Asl.* May I ask if your father-in-law is not going round the town buying up all the shares in the Baths?

*Dr. Stock.* Yes, he has been buying Baths shares to-day; but—

*Asl.* It would have been more prudent to get some else to do it—some one less nearly related to you.

*Hov.* And you should not have let your name appear in the affair. There was no need for anyone to know that the attack on the Baths came from you. You ought to have consulted me, Dr. Stockmann.

*Dr. Stock.* [*looks in front of him; then a light seems to dawn on him and he says in amazement*]. Are such things conceivable? Are such things possible?

*Asl.* [*with a smile*]. Evidently they are. But it is better to use a little *finesse*, you know.

*Hov.* And it is much better to have several persons in a thing of that sort; because the responsibility of each individual is lessened, when there are others with him.

*Dr. Stock.* [*composedly*]. Come to the point, gentlemen. What do you want?

*Asl.* Perhaps Mr. Hovstad had better—

*Hov.* No, you tell him, Aslaksen.

*Asl.* Well, the fact is that, now we know the bearings of the whole affair, we think we might venture to put the *People's Messenger* at your disposal.

*Dr. Stock.* Do you dare do that now? What about public opinion? Are you not afraid of a storm breaking upon our heads?

*Hov.* We will try to weather it.

*Asl.* And you must be ready to go off quickly on a new tack, Doctor. As soon as your invective has done its work—

*Dr. Stock.* Do you mean, as soon as my father-in-law and I have got hold of the shares at a low figure?

*Hov.* Your reasons for wishing to get the control of the Baths are mainly scientific, I take it.

*Dr. Stock.* Of course, it was for scientific reasons that I persuaded the old "Badger" to stand in with me in the matter. So we will tinker at the conduit-pipes a little, and dig up a little bit of the shore, and it shan't cost the town a sixpence. That will be all right—eh?

*Hov.* I think so—if you have the *People's Messenger* behind you.

*Asl.* The Press is a power in a free community, Doctor.

*Dr. Stock.* Quite so. And so is public opinion. And you, Mr. Aslaksen—I suppose you will be answerable for the Householders' Association?

*Asl.* Yes, and for the Temperance Society. You may rely on that.

*Dr. Stock.* But, gentlemen—I really am ashamed to ask the question—but, what return do you—?

*Hov.* We should prefer to help you without any return whatever, believe me. But the *People's Messenger* is in rather a shaky condition; it doesn't go really well; and I should be very unwilling to suspend the paper now, when there is so much work to do here in the political way.

*Dr. Stock.* Quite so; that would be a great trial to such a friend of the people as you are. [*Flares up.*] But I am an enemy of the people, remember! [*Walks about the room.*] Where have I put my stick? Where the devil is my stick?

*Hov.* What's that?

*Asl.* Surely you never mean—?

*Dr. Stock.* [*standing still*]. And suppose I don't give you a single penny of all I get out of it? Money is not very easy to get out of us rich folk, please to remember!

*Hov.* And you please to remember that this affair of the shares can be represented in two ways!

*Dr. Stock.* Yes, and you are just the man to do it. If I don't come to the rescue of the *People's Messenger*, you will certainly take an evil view of the affair; you will hunt me down, I can well imagine—pursue me—try to throttle me as a dog does a hare.

*Hov.* It is a natural law; every animal must fight for its own livelihood.

*Asl.* And get its food where it can, you know.

*Dr. Stock.* [*walking about the room*]. Then you go and look for yours in the gutter; because I am going to show you which is the strongest animal of us three! [*Finds an umbrella and brandishes it above his head.*] Ah, now—!

*Hov.* You are surely not going to use violence!

*Asl.* Take care what you are doing with that umbrella.

*Dr. Stock.* Out of the window with you, Mr. Hovstad!

*Hov.* [*edging to the door*]. Are you quite mad!

*Dr. Stock.* Out of the window, Mr. Aslaksen! Jump, I tell you! You will have to do it, sooner or later.

*Asl.* [*running round the writing-table*]. Moderation, Doctor—I am a delicate man—I can stand so little—[*Calls out*] help, help!

MRS. STOCKMANN, PETRA *and* HORSTER
*come in from the sitting-room*

*Mrs. Stock.* Good gracious, Thomas! What is happening?

*Dr. Stock.* [*brandishing the umbrella*]. Jump out, I tell you! Out into the gutter!

*Hov.* An assault on an unoffending man! I call you to witness, Captain Horster. [*Hurries out through the hall*

*Asl.* [*irresolutely*]. If only I knew the way about here—.

[*Steals out through the sitting-room*

*Mrs. Stock.* [*holding her husband back*]. Control yourself, Thomas!

*Dr. Stock.* [*throwing down the umbrella*]. Upon my soul, they have escaped after all.

*Mrs. Stock.* What did they want you to do?

*Dr. Stock.* I will tell you later on; I have something else to think about now. [*Goes to the table and writes something on a calling-card.*] Look there, Katherine; what is written there?

*Mrs. Stock.* Three big *Noes;* what does that mean?

*Dr. Stock.* I will tell you that too, later on. [*Holds out the card to* PETRA.] There, Petra; tell sooty-face to run over to the "Badger's" with that, as quick as she can. Hurry up!

[PETRA *takes the card and goes out to the hall*

*Dr. Stock.* Well, I think I have had a visit from every one of the devil's messengers to-day! But now I am going to sharpen my pen till they can feel its point; I shall dip it in venom and gall; I shall hurl my inkpot at their heads!

*Mrs. Stock.* Yes, but we are going away, you know, Thomas.

PETRA *comes back*

*Dr. Stock.* Well?

*Petra.* She has gone with it.

*Dr. Stock.* Good.—Going away, did you say? No, I'll be hanged if we are going away! We are going to stay where we are, Katherine!

*Petra.* Stay here?

*Mrs. Stock.* Here, in the town?

*Dr. Stock.* Yes, here. This is the field of battle—this is where the fight will be. This is where I shall triumph! As soon as I have had my trousers sewn up I shall go out and look for another house. We must have a roof over our heads for the winter.

*Hor.* That you shall have in my house.

*Dr. Stock.* Can I?

*Hor.* Yes, quite well. I have plenty of room, and I am almost never at home.

*Mrs. Stock.* How good of you, Captain Horster!

*Petra.* Thank you!

*Dr. Stock.* [*grasping his hand*]. Thank you, thank you! That is one trouble over! Now I can set to work in earnest at once. There is an endless amount of things to look through here, Katherine! Luckily I shall have all my time at my disposal; because I have been dismissed from the Baths, you know.

*Mrs. Stock.* [*with a sigh*]. Oh yes, I expected that.

*Dr. Stock.* And they want to take my practice away from me too. Let them! I have got the poor people to fall back upon, anyway—those that don't pay anything; and, after all, they need me most, too. But, by Jove, they will have to listen to me; I shall preach to them in season and out of season, as it says somewhere.

*Mrs. Stock.* But dear Thomas, I should have thought events had showed you what use it is to preach.

*Dr. Stock.* You are really ridiculous, Katherine. Do you want me to let myself be beaten off the field by public opinion and the compact majority and all that devilry? No, thank you! And what I want to do is so simple and clear and straightforward. I only want to drum into the heads of these curs the fact that the liberals are the most insidious enemies of freedom—that party programmes strangle every young and vigorous truth—that considerations of expediency turn morality and justice upside down—and that they will end by making life here unbearable. Don't you think, Captain Horster, that I ought to be able to make people understand that?

*Hor.* Very likely; I don't know much about such things myself.

*Dr. Stock.* Well, look here—I will explain! It is the party leaders that must be exterminated. A party leader is like a wolf, you see—like a voracious wolf. He requires a certain number of smaller victims to prey upon every year, if he is to live. Just look at Hovstad and Aslaksen! How many smaller victims have they not put an end to—or at any rate maimed and mangled until they are fit for nothing except to be householders or subscribers to the *People's Messenger!* [*Sits down on the edge of the table.*] Come here, Katherine—look how beautifully the sun shines to-day! And this lovely spring air I am drinking in!

*Mrs. Stock.* Yes, if only we could live on sunshine and spring air, Thomas.

*Dr. Stock.* Oh, you will have to pinch and save a bit—then we shall get along. That gives me very little concern. What is much worse is, that I know of no one who is liberal-minded and high-minded enough to venture to take up my work after me.

*Petra.* Don't think about that, father; you have plenty of time before you.—Hullo, here are the boys already!

EJLIF *and* MORTEN *come in from the sitting-room*

*Mrs. Stock.* Have you got a holiday?

*Mort.* No; but we were fighting with the other boys between lessons—

*Ejlif.* That isn't true; it was the other boys were fighting with us.

*Mort.* Well, and then Mr. Rörlund said we had better stay at home for a day or two.

*Dr. Stock.* [*snapping his fingers and getting up from the table*]. I have it! I have it, by Jove! You shall never set foot in the school again!

*The Boys.* No more school!

*Mrs. Stock.* But, Thomas—

*Dr. Stock.* Never, I say. I will educate you myself; that is to say, you shan't learn a blessed thing—

*Mort.* Hooray!

*Dr. Stock.* —but I will make liberal-minded and high-minded men of you. You must help me with that, Petra.

*Petra.* Yes, father, you may be sure I will.

*Dr. Stock.* And my school shall be in the room where they insulted me and called me an enemy of the people. But we are too few as we are; I must have at at least twelve boys to begin with.

*Mrs. Stock.* You will certainly never get them in this town.

*Dr. Stock.* We shall. [*To the boys.*] Don't you know any street urchins—regular ragamuffins—?

*Mort.* Yes, father, I know lots!

*Dr. Stock.* That's capital! Bring me some specimens of them. I am going to experiment with curs, just for once; there may be some exceptional heads amongst them.

*Mort.* And what are we going to do, when you have made liberal-minded and high-minded men of us?

*Dr. Stock.* Then you shall drive all the wolves out of the country, my boys!

EJLIF *looks rather doubtful about it;* MORTEN *jumps about crying* "Hurrah!"

*Mrs. Stock.* Let us hope it won't be the wolves that will drive you out of the country, Thomas.

*Dr. Stock.* Are you out of your mind, Katherine? Drive me out! Now—when I am the strongest man in the town!

*Mrs. Stock.* The strongest—now?

*Dr. Stock.* Yes, and I will go so far as to say that now I am the strongest man in the whole world.

*Mort.* I say!

*Dr. Stock.* [*lowering his voice*]. Hush! You mustn't say anything about it yet; but I have made a great discovery.

*Mrs. Stock.* Another one?

*Dr. Stock.* Yes. [*Gathers them round him, and says confidentially:*] It is this, let me tell you—that the strongest man in the world is he who stands most alone.

*Mrs. Stock.* [*smiling and shaking her head*]. Oh, Thomas, Thomas!

*Petra* [*encouragingly, as she grasps her father's hands*]. Father!

## AMERICAN DRAMA

Up until the present day the history of American drama has been practically identical with the history of English drama. In the early colonial epoch America was too busy transforming itself into a country and a nation to have time for the theatre. As was to be expected, drama was first fostered beyond the pale of Puritan influence. Soon after the eighteenth century opens, however, we find the plays of contemporary England being performed by amateurs and by college students,—William and Mary College holding first honors in this respect. In 1752 a professional English company, the Hallams, came over to America, and after a season at Williamsburg, Virginia, went to New York, Philadelphia, and Charleston, South Carolina. A theatre had been built in the latter city as early as 1736, and Lewis Hallam built a theatre in New York. But the early theatres were, in the main, improvised or temporary. The first permanent theatre was the

Southwark, erected in Philadelphia in 1766. Here was performed in 1767 the first American tragedy, *The Prince of Parthia*, a heroic play in blank verse by Thomas Godfrey. In the same year the John Street Theatre was built in New York, followed, after the Revolution, by the Park Theatre, erected in 1798. The play that claims the distinction of being the first real American drama, written by an American and produced by a professional American company, is a comedy-of-manners, entitled *The Contrast*, by the distinguished jurist, **Royall Tyler** (1757–1826). It was acted in New York in the John Street Theatre in 1787. In it appears in the character of the servant Jonathan one of the first of the long series of typical Yankees.

A contemporary of Tyler's, **William Dunlap** (1766–1839), was the most influential figure in American dramatic history during the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth. He produced more than fifty plays of his own, original and adapted, before he finally abandoned the theatre for the career of a painter. His *History of the American Theatre*, published in 1832, gives an intimate account of the early struggles of the theatre in this country.

Of the other early dramatists the most famous was **John Howard Payne** (1791–1852). He made his first appearance as an actor at eighteen in the part of young Norval in Home's *Douglas;* and when, four years later, he acted the same part at Drury Lane he was acclaimed "the American Roscius." He remained in England for twenty years as actor and playwright. He was the author of many plays which held the stage in America as well as abroad throughout the first half of the century. The best liked were *Brutus, or the Fall of Tarquin*, and *Charles the Second, or the Merry Monarch* (1824). Washington Irving had a hand in the comedy of the latter. It is, however, on one song rather than on his plays that Payne's fame now rests. That is, of course, *Home, Sweet Home* from his opera *Clari; or the Maid of Milan*, which was performed at Covent Garden in 1823.

There were other dramatists, to be sure. Plays were written about the Indians, and the frontier; about heroes like Davy Crockett and Major André; about the Revolutionary War; and, later, about the Civil War,—a prime favorite being a dramatization of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852). But, after all, these plays are not enduring except as historical records. For the most part America contented itself with repeating London successes. This was made more easy after 1821 by the fact that English actors came to America on tour. The nineteenth century produced great actors rather than great plays. Since there were no international copyright laws, America, like other countries of Europe, imported much of its drama from France, but with a London trade-mark.

During the last forty years of the century, in addition to importations from England and adaptations from France, romantic plays, dramatizations of Victorian novels, especially Dickens, and Irish comedies by the ever-popular **Dion Boucicault,**[1] packed the theatres. Three of the most popular native dramas of this era were **Joseph Jefferson's** *Rip van Winkle* (1859), in which he created the part that is one of America's best-loved traditions; **Bronson Howard's** *Shenandoah* (1888); and **James A. Herne's** *Shore Acres* (1892). The last two are sentimental melodramas with characterization of American rural types and with realistic local color. Yet the majority of the playwrights avoided transcribing the American life around them for the stage, and sought their subjects far afield. It was not until late in the century that American drama took its place as a national literary product with the work of **Clyde Fitch** (1865–1909), **William Vaughan Moody** (1869–1910), **Augustus Thomas** (1857– ), and others, whose plays really belong to the history of contemporary drama. At the present time the one American dramatist with a world-wide reputation is **Eugene O'Neill** (1888– ). His artistic and original plays, first produced in New York by The Theatre Guild, are now recognized in England and in Europe as significant contributions to modern drama.

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[1] See page 545.

### Clyde Fitch

The fact that to-day America, even more perhaps than any other country, is experiencing a dramatic renascence, may be in large measure attributed to the example and influence of **Clyde Fitch** (William Clyde Fitch, 1865–1909). This hardworking young dramatist wrote, his biographer states, sixty-two plays[1] in his short life—an average of nearly four plays a year throughout the sixteen years of his career as dramatist.

After a typical public school education in Schenectady and Hartford, followed by a short career at a private school in New Hampshire, Clyde Fitch entered Amherst, ostensibly to become an architect. During his college course he began writing; and upon his graduation in 1886, he definitely adopted a literary career. When his finances were at a low ebb, success burst upon him. Richard Mansfield, the prominent actor, was in need of a suitable play. Clyde Fitch was suggested to him as a possible author, and a contract between them was entered into. Finally after some disappointments, Fitch's play, *Beau Brummel*, was completed, and produced on May 17, 1890. With Mansfield in the title rôle, the play was extraordinarily successful.

From that time on Clyde Fitch found his future assured. He devoted himself to playwriting and directing of rehearsals. This continuous work was interrupted only by trips abroad and vacations to his country homes. His seemingly inexhaustible vitality wore down under the strain of constant writing and rehearsing. In 1909, while on one of his European summer vacations, he died suddenly in France at Châlons-sur-Marne. His last play, *The City*, was left unfinished, but was produced posthumously.

In general Clyde Fitch's plays fall into two types: the romantic, historical play; and serious social drama. Of the first, the best known are: *Beau Brummel* (1890); *Nathan Hale* (1898); *Barbara Frietchie* (1899); *Captain Jinks of the Horse Marines* (1901). Of the second type, the most psychological are: *The Climbers* (1901); *The Truth* (1906); *The City* (1909).

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[1] See: Appendix in *Clyde Fitch and His Letters* by Montrose J. Moses and Virginia Gerson (1924). Of these 62 plays, Mr. Moses lists 36 as original, 21 as adaptations, 5 as dramatizations of novels; besides 2 vaudeville sketches.

# THE TRUTH[1]

## A Play in Four Acts[2]

CLYDE FITCH

*Produced at Cleveland, Ohio, in October, 1906; then at The Criterion, New York, on January 7, 1907; and at the Comedy Theatre, London, on April 6, 1907*

*To*
*Marie Tempest*
*with grateful admiration for*
*her triumphant Becky on*
*April 6, 1907*
*C. F.*

ACT I. AT THE WARDERS', NEW YORK
*Thursday Afternoon*

ACT II. AT THE WARDERS'
*Saturday Afternoon, just after lunch*

ACT III. AT STEPHEN ROLAND'S, BALTIMORE
*Saturday Night*

ACT IV. AT STEPHEN ROLAND'S
*Monday Morning*

### THE PERSONS IN THE PLAY

WARDER
ROLAND
LINDON
SERVANT AT THE WARDERS'
BECKY WARDER
EVE LINDON
LAURA FRASER
MRS. GENEVIEVE CRESPIGNY
MESSENGER BOY

## ACT I

*At* MRS. WARDER'S. *An extremely attractive room, in the best of taste, gray walls with dull soft green mouldings, old French chintz curtains, furniture painted to match the walls and covered with the same chintz. Some old colored engravings are on the mantel shelf and a couple of eighteenth-century French portraits on the wall. On the Left is a mantel, and near it a large writing table against the back of a low sofa which faces the audience; on the table a telephone; an armchair and a small table on the Left; a Baby Grand piano in the upper left corner of the room. Some consols and tables in the room;*

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*four windows at the back, through which one sees the park. Doors, Right and Left; books, photographs, flowers, etc., on the tables and consols.*

*A smart, good-looking man-servant,* Jenks, *shows in* Mrs. Lindon *and* Laura Fraser. *The former is a handsome, nervous, overstrung woman of about thirty-four, very fashionably dressed;* Miss Fraser, *on the contrary, a matter-of-fact, rather commonplace type of good humor—wholesomeness united to a kind sense of humor.* Mrs. Lindon *is the sort of woman warranted to put any one on edge in the course of a few hours' consecutive association, while friction with* Miss Fraser *is equally certain to smooth down the raw edges.*

*Mrs. Lindon* [*coming in to a chair near the Centre with quick determination*]. You have no idea when Mrs. Warder will be in?

*Servant.* No, madam.

*Mrs. Lin.* She was lunching out?

*Serv.* Yes, madam.

*Laura* [*with a movement to go*]. Come! She may be playing bridge and not come home for hours.

*Mrs. Lin.* [*firm, though irritable*]. I will wait till half-past five. [*To* Servant.] If Mrs. Warder comes in before that, we will be here.

*Nervously picks up check-book from the writing-table, looks at it but not in it, and puts it down.*

*Serv.* Very good, madam.

[*Goes out Left*

*Laura* [*goes to* Eve]. My dear, you must control yourself. That man, if he has half a servant's curiosity, could easily see you are excited.

*Mrs. Lin.* Yes, but think! She's been meeting Fred probably every day for the last two months, although she knew I had left his house, and always pretended to me she never saw him!

*Sitting beside the writing-table.*

*Laura* [*sitting Left*]. You shouldn't have come here at once. You should have waited till you had time to think over your information and calm yourself a little.

*Mrs. Lin.* I couldn't wait! Becky! One of my oldest friends! One of my bridesmaids!

*Laura.* What!

*Mrs. Lin.* No, she wasn't, but she might have been; she was my next choice if any one had backed out.

*Laura.* Probably Fred's appealing to her sympathy,—you know your own husband!

*Mrs. Lin.* [*with a disagreeable half-laugh*]. Yes, I know him better than she does! What I don't like is her secrecy about it after I'd made her the confidante of my trouble!

*Laura.* I thought *I* was that?

*Mrs. Lin.* You are—another! But you mustn't forget that I have gone to Becky in hysterics and begged her to make it up for me with Fred.

*Laura.* Were you perfectly frank with her?

*Mrs. Lin.* Perfectly! I told her the truth, and more too! I told her I loved Fred in spite of his faults—Good Heavens! if a woman had to find a *faultless* man to love!—I've asked her advice.

*Rising nervously and going to the sofa.*

*Laura.* You haven't taken it!

*Mrs. Lin.* That doesn't make any difference! Who ever does? [*Sitting on the sofa.*] She *owed* me her loyalty instead of flirting with Fred behind my back.

*She opens the cigar box on the writing-table behind her and then bangs it shut.*

*Laura.* Perhaps she's really trying to make peace between you in her own way!

*Mrs. Lin.* Does it look like it? Actually telling me yesterday she wouldn't trust herself in his presence for fear she'd lose her control and tell him what she thought of him!—and all the time she had an appointment to meet him this afternoon—in the *Eden Musée*,[1] if you please!

*Laura* [*with comic disgust*]. Oh! Horrors!

*Mrs. Lin.* Yes, in the chamber of them! If that isn't compromising!

*Laura.* Eve!

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[1] Eden Musée: A museum of realistic wax figures of life size. The Chamber of Horrors in the basement contained particularly gruesome representations of crime and torture.

*Mrs. Lin.* And Tom Warder so nice! *Everybody* likes him!

*Picks up stamp box and bangs it down.*

*Laura.* Including Becky. That's the point. Becky *loves* her own husband. What does she want of yours?

*Mrs. Lin.* She loved Tom Warder when she married him, but that was in 1903! Besides, Becky always liked having men fond of her whether she cared for them or not.

*Laura.* Nonsense!

*Mrs. Lin.* She's what the French call an "*allumeuse*"—leads them on till they lose their heads, then she gets frightened and feels insulted!

*Laura.* But you claim she *does* care for Fred!

*Mrs. Lin.* My dear, a magnetic man like Fred has a way of winding himself around a woman and keeping himself wound as long as he wishes! even when *she doesn't* wish,—look at me! I'd give anything to throw him off for good, but I can't stop being in love with him!

*Laura* [*who has moved over to the chair beside the sofa, pats* EVE'S *hand*]. Poor old Eve! Well, when she comes, what are you going to do?

*Mrs. Lin.* Give her one more chance to tell me the truth! I'll ask her outright when she saw Fred last.

*Laura.* But if she keeps on with her "bluff" of not seeing him, you can't tell her she lies without making a horrid scene, and what good would that do?

*Mrs. Lin.* Exactly! She'd never acknowledge she was lying but just go on! I may appeal to Tom Warder himself!

*Rises and goes to mantel, looking at the fly-leaves of two books on a table which she passes.*

*Laura.* No!

*Mrs. Lin.* Why not? We've been friends since babies.

*Laura.* You *wouldn't!*

*Mrs. Lin.* I don't accuse Becky of anything dreadful! Besides, it will be for his good too, as well as mine,—he knows Fred, and I'll wager anything he'll be as eager as I to stop any excess of friendship with him. [*Goes up to the window.*] Sh! here she is! and a man with her!

*Laura* [*Rises, excited, and joins her*]. Who?

*Mrs. Lin.* [*going to the other window*]. I can't see.

*Laura* [*joining her at the second window*]. Suppose it should be—

*Mrs. Lin.* Exactly! If she hears I'm here, she'll never let him in. [*She starts with a new idea and goes to the door Right.*] The window in that hall juts out; perhaps we can see the front door from there. Come quickly!

[*Tries to pull* LAURA *out Right*

*Laura.* I don't approve of what you're doing at all.

*Mrs. Lin.* Oh, come!

[*They go out and close the door behind them*

*The* SERVANT *shows in* BECKY *and* LINDON, *Left.* BECKY *is a pretty, charming, volatile young woman, sprightly, vivacious, lovable. She is dressed ultra smartly, and in the best of taste.* LINDON *is dapper, rather good-looking, though not particularly strong in character, and full of a certain personal charm. He also wears very fashionable clothes. He is a man whose chief aim in life is to amuse himself.*

*Serv.* Mrs. Lindon and Miss Fraser were waiting to see you, madam; they must have gone.

*Becky* [*with a humorous raising of the eyebrows and a look to* LINDON]. Oh!—I'm so sorry! [*The* SERVANT *goes out*

*Lindon.* Gee! what a narrow escape.

*Laura* [*off stage Right, pleading loudly*]. Eve! Eve!! Come!!!

*Mrs. Lin.* [*off stage Right, loudly*]. I will not. I will run my own affairs my own way.

*Becky* [*who has heard this, with an amused, mischievous expression*]. They are there! Do you suppose they saw you?

*They lower their voices slightly.*

*Lin.* Well,—Eve can see through most things, but not through the walls! Good-by.

*He starts to hurry out, but* BECKY *stops him.*

*Becky.* You must come back! That's what I brought you home with me to-day for—to talk about Eve. This estrangement has gone on long enough. I've come to the conclusion you're as much to blame as she is,—or more.

*Lin.* I like *that* from *you!*

*Becky.* I mean it, and if she wants you back, you've got to go.

*Lin.* Well, let me get a cocktail first.

*Becky.* I'm serious.

*Lin.* So'll I be if Eve comes in and catches me. [*Going*

*Becky* [*going with him*]. I'll let you out—but I expect you here again in half an hour. Do you understand? [*They go out Left. Off stage.*] You're to come back at six.

*Lin.* [*off stage, at a distance*]. All right.

Eve *comes in excitedly from the Right*

*Mrs. Lin.* I think it is Fred! Watch from the window! I'll stay here in case Becky comes in. [*She comes to the writing-table.*] I'd like to scratch her eyes out!

Laura *comes in and goes to right of the sofa*

*Laura.* It *was* Fred.

*Mrs. Lin.* [*gives a tigerish, half-controlled, hushed cry of rage*]. The *wretched little beast!*

Becky *comes in with a start of surprise. She beams*

*Becky.* My dears! What a pleasant surprise! Why didn't Jenks tell me? Where in the world did you drop from? Laura darling!

*She kisses* Laura, *who is very unresponsive, having pressed* Mrs. Lindon's *hand as she passed her.*

*Mrs. Lin.* We heard you come in,—we thought *with* some one,—and I'm rather upset, we went in there till you should be alone. If you are busy, don't let us interrupt.

Becky *shows that she is relieved when she hears they don't know* Fred *was there.*

*Becky.* O dear, no, I'm not busy. I came home alone,—you must have heard me talking with the servant. I've been playing bridge since luncheon.

Becky *and* Laura *sit on the sofa.*

*Mrs. Lin.* Where?

*Becky.* Clara Ford's, our usual four.

Laura *and* Eve *exchange glances.*

*Mrs. Lin.* Why! I saw her lunching at Sherry's.

*Becky* [*quickly, after only a second's hesitation*]. Yes, she couldn't play today, but it was her turn at her house, so we went all the same—and—er—er—Belle Prescott took her place.

*Another surreptitious look passes between* Laura *and* Mrs. Lindon.

*Laura.* Did you win?

*Becky.* Yes, a hundred and fifty!

*Laura.* A hundred and fifty? Good!

*Mrs. Lin.* [*who has seated herself in the chair beside the sofa*]. Becky, Laura knows all my troubles; she's the bosom I weep them out on.

*Becky.* Oh, come, I've gathered a few dewey diamonds off my laces! Well, how is Fred behaving? Has he shown any sign yet?

*Mrs. Lin.* Not one. I thought perhaps you'd have some news.

*Becky* [*looking away*]. I? How should I have?

*Leans over and smooths her skirt.* Mrs. Lindon *exchanges a look with* Laura.

*Mrs. Lin.* You said two days ago for me to keep silent and wait, and Fred would make an advance.

*Becky.* And so he will, I'm sure! unless you do what you threatened. [*To* Laura.] I tell Eve if she starts a suit for separation or does anything of that sort publicly, Fred may be furious and accept the situation, no matter how much of a bluff it might be on Eve's part.

*Laura.* Very likely.

*Mrs. Lin.* I thought perhaps you meant to see Fred and have a talk with him?

*Becky.* No! [Mrs. Lindon *and* Laura *exchange glances, as* Becky, *rising, rings bell Right.*] What good would that do? To have the reconciliation mean anything it must be of his own volition. He must come for you, Eve, because he misses you, because he wants you back. [Mrs. Lindon *joins* Laura *on the sofa and talks in a loud and excited whisper to her as to* Becky's *very evident pre-*

*varication.* SERVANT *enters Right;* BECKY *speaks to him aside, amusedly watching them, and then comes above table. As she comes back.*] Well?

*Mrs. Lin.* I believe there's another woman in it!

*Becky* [*laughing*]. I knew she was jealous! [*To* MRS. LINDON.] That's just the sort of thing that has made quarrels all along between you and Fred.

*She comes to her.*

*Mrs. Lin.* Well, if you knew all I've had to forgive Fred, and all I have forgiven, you'd realize I had good reason always for my share of the quarrels.

*Becky.* Listen to me, Eve. You're a luckier woman than you know!

*Mrs. Lin.* [*startled*]. How do you mean?

LAURA *puts her hand on* EVE'S *shoulder to calm her.*

*Becky.* Because, instead of having the forgiveness always on his side, you have the blessed privilege of doing the forgiveness yourself. [MRS. LINDON *gives a falsetto snort.*] You may smile if you like—

*Mrs. Lin.* [*interrupting*]. Oh, no, thank you. I don't feel at all like smiling!

*Becky.* Well, honestly, I envy you. [*Takes* EVE'S *hands in hers.* MRS. LINDON *looks once at* LAURA *questioningly, and back again quickly to* BECKY.] You know I love Tom with my whole heart—and it's a big heart for a little woman—and yet I keep him forgiving me—forgiving me something or other all the time. I'd be afraid his forgiveness would wear out, only it's in his soul instead of his body, and if our bodies wear out, our souls *don't*—do they? Already at the very beginning of our life together I owe him more dear forgiveness than I can ever repay, and believe me, Eve, such a debt would be unbearable for a woman unless she *adored* her husband.

*Mrs. Lin.* You've too much sentiment—I'm practical.

*Becky* [*sitting down in the chair at Centre*]. Does being practical give you one-half the happiness my "sentiment" gives me?

*Mrs. Lin.* Nonsense! My sympathies are with the one who has the forgiving to do.

*Becky.* You mean, like all selfish people, you sympathize with yourself, so you'll never be happy, even if you get Fred back.

*Mrs. Lin.* [*startled, angry*]. *If?* What do you mean by that?

*Looks at* BECKY, *then at* LAURA, *sharply, then back at* BECKY.

*Becky* [*smiling*]. Say *when* instead! *when* you get Fred back. Trust me, teach yourself to be grateful that it is *you* who have to forgive, and not the other way round.

*Mrs. Lin.* [*Rises, facing her, almost triumphantly, fully persuaded that* BECKY *is in the wrong*]. I knew when I came here you'd make excuses for him.

*Becky* [*smiling*]. You've misunderstood me. I'm *trying* to make them for you.

*Mrs. Lin.* Thank you. *You* need excuses more than I do.

*Laura* [*Rises, alarmed*]. Eve!

*Mrs. Lin.* I am perfectly well aware that I made a very serious mistake in coming to *you* of all women!

*Becky* [*Rises*]. In that case I think it best to consider the matter closed between us.

*Mrs. Lin.* You can think what you please, but I have no such intention!

*Laura.* Eve! [*She sits again on the sofa.*] Really Becky has shown herself reasonable and kind, and you've said enough to-day. We'd better go.

*Becky.* I should have to ask you to excuse me in any case, as I have an engagement in a few minutes.

MRS. LINDON *looks meaningly at* LAURA.

*Mrs. Lin.* [*to* BECKY]. I intend to have the whole thing out now!

WARDER *enters Left*

WARDER *is a strong and sensible, unsuspicious man,—no nerves and no "temperament," nothing subtle about him; he is straightforward and lovable.*

*Warder.* Oh, excuse me!

*Becky.* No, come in, Tom; it's Laura and Mrs. Lindon.

LAURA *and* MRS. LINDON *say* "How do you do," *as* WARDER *comes into the room. He greets them in turn.* BECKY *writes in pencil on a sheet of paper on the desk.*

*Ward.* I wanted to ask Becky if she wished to go to a theatre to-night.

*Becky.* Yes, I should like to. [*She indicates to* TOM *that she wants* EVE *and* LAURA *to go, and having finished writing, comes to him.*] I'm sorry, but you really must excuse me. [*Slipping into* WARDER'S *hand the note she had secretly written.*] Mrs. Lindon and Laura *are going.* What are *you* going to do now?

MRS. LINDON *looks again meaningly at* LAURA.

*Ward.* I thought I'd go round to the club till dinner.

*Becky* [*relieved*]. That's right. I shall be engaged till half-past six,—er—Mrs. Clayton is coming to see me about the Golf Club at Roslyn—and—lots of things. You needn't hurry back.

*She gives him an affectionate little squeeze of the arm and goes out Right. He looks down at the paper slyly and reads it.*

*Mrs. Lin.* [*Rises and goes to* TOM]. Tom, if you've nothing in particular on at the club, would you give me half an hour?

*Laura* [*Rises and goes to* EVE]. Eve, you haven't the time yourself; you must come with me.

*Ward.* [*suppressing a smile as he finishes reading the note, he is a little embarrassed*]. Well—really—Eve—I don't know,—I'll tell you how it is—

*Mrs. Lin.* Oh, I don't mean here! I know Becky wrote you a note telling you not to let me stay, didn't she?

*Ward.* [*laughing*]. She did—you see, she has an engagement. [*Reading from the paper, good-naturedly.*] "Get rid of Eve, I want the room."

*Mrs. Lin.* At six o'clock.

*Glances meaningly at* LAURA.

*Ward.* [*casually*]. Is it?

*Mrs. Lin.* To see *Fred* in!

*Laura.* Eve! be sensible!

*Ward.* No, it's for Mrs. Clayton about Roslyn.

*Mrs. Lin.* Then why must she be rid of me? Georgia Clayton and I are the best of friends, and I have as much to do with Roslyn as Becky.

*Ward.* [*still pleasantly*]. I suppose Becky has a good reason, if she cared to tell us.

*Mrs. Lin.* I *know* Becky has an appointment *here*, at *six*, with Fred.

*Laura.* You don't *know* it, Eve!

*Mrs. Lin.* I *do*.

*Ward.* [*still pleasantly*]. In any case that is Becky's and Fred's business, isn't it?

*Mrs. Lin.* You *know* Fred!

*Ward.* Yes!

*Mrs. Lin.* Well?

*Ward.* You don't want my opinion of Fred, at this late day! I also know Becky!

*Mrs. Lin.* Becky and Fred meet every single day.

*Laura* [*interpolates*]. She *thinks* so.

*Ward.* What are you talking about?

*Mrs. Lin.* What I *know!* And if you'll wait here with me a few minutes now, in spite of what Becky said, you'll see *Fred* and not Mrs. Clayton arrive.

*Ward.* If your husband is really coming, it was probably to spare you that Becky spoke of Mrs. Clayton, and I shouldn't think of embarrassing her by waiting.

*Mrs. Lin.* [*disagreeably, irritatingly*]. Oh, you don't mind, then?

*Ward.* Almost any man, my dear Eve, would mind your husband meeting his wife every day! I only think you've been misinformed, or only half informed, that's all.

*Mrs. Lin.* You are aware that Fred and I have been separated for two months?

*Ward.* Yes, Becky told me.

*Laura* [*looking at her watch*]. It's almost six now. Come, Eve.

*Ward.* [*going toward the door*]. Yes, I'm afraid I must ask you—

*Rings electric bell on wall beside the door.*

*Mrs. Lin.* [*going to him*]. Tom, for the sake of our boy and girl friendship, walk home with me, and let me speak plainly.

*Laura* [*on the other side of* Warder]. Mr. Warder, please don't go.

*Mrs. Lin.* [*to* Laura, *angry*]. What do you mean? [*To* Warder, *pleadingly.*] I've no other man in the world to go to; I need advice. Won't you give me yours?

*Ward.* [*Looks at her a moment, hesitates, then says*]. My advice? Of course, if you wish that. [*The* Servant *appears in the doorway in answer to the bell. To* Servant.] My hat and coat—and say to Mrs. Warder I'm walking home with Mrs. Lindon. [*He goes out Left*

*Serv.* Yes, sir. [*Follows him out*

Laura *looks significantly at* Mrs. Lindon.

*Laura.* If you keep on, there soon won't be a soul left in New York whose advice you haven't asked and not taken!

*Mrs. Lin.* Well, it's my *own trouble;* I can do what I like with it. What are *you* going to do now?

*She sits in the armchair at the Left.*

*Laura* [*going to her*]. Don't tell him all you think you know about Becky.

*Mrs. Lin.* *Think!*

*Laura.* It will be a very great mistake.

*Mrs. Lin.* Laura, I'll tell you the truth; I've had Fred watched by private detectives for over a month, and I have a list of dates and places of their meetings to more than prove what I say.

*Laura.* How dreadful of you!

*Mrs. Lin.* Oh, wait till you get a husband, and then you'll sympathize more with a woman who is trying to keep one!

*Laura.* But these places where they meet?

*Mrs. Lin.* Are respectable so far as I know. But *daily* meetings my dear, *daily!*

*Laura.* And you'll tell Mr. Warder?

*Mrs. Lin.* I don't know yet how much I shall tell. What are you going to do now?

*Laura.* Wait till to-morrow! Give yourself time to recover, to consider.

*Mrs. Lin.* [*Simply repeats*]. What are you going to do now?

*Laura* [*Deliberately crosses to the chair at Centre and sits*]. Stay and see Becky.

*Mrs. Lin.* [*Rises, delighted*]. Oh, do! Stay till Fred comes, and catch her!

*Laura.* No, no! I've finished with this now. I don't sympathize with what you're going to do.

*Ward.* [*with hat and coat, in the doorway*]. Ready?

*Mrs. Lin.* Yes.

*Ward.* Good-by, Laura.

*Laura.* Good-by. [Mrs. Lindon *goes out Left with* Warder. *After the outside door is heard to close* Becky *comes into the room hurriedly. She stops suddenly on seeing* Laura, *turns and tries to steal out. Just as she gets to the door,* Laura *catches her.*] Becky!

Becky *turns and their eyes meet.* Becky *laughs, realizing she is caught.*

*Becky.* Oh, you didn't go with them?

*Laura.* No!

*Becky.* Had enough of Eve to-day?

*Laura.* Not enough of you.

*Becky* [*Sings instead of speaks*]. "Thank you!"

*She puts her arm around* Laura, *and they sit on the sofa.*

*Laura.* Becky, why won't you be frank with Eve?

*Becky.* I was.

*Laura.* No, you didn't tell the truth about seeing Fred.

*Becky.* Oh, that!

*Laura.* Yes, that!

*Becky.* I may have seen him once or twice, that's all.

*Laura.* Exactly what Eve says—you don't tell the truth!

*Becky.* It's false! I never told a malicious lie in my life. I never told a fib that hurt any one but myself!

*Laura.* Tell Eve the truth. Make her have confidence in you. She says if you cross the ferry to Jersey City, you say you've been abroad.

*Becky* [*laughing*]. Well, so I *have!* Laura! I'm doing my best to make Eve happy. I can't do any more than my best, and if I do it at all, I must do it my own way!

*Laura.* You've seen Fred to-day.

*Becky.* No, I haven't.

*Laura.* Becky! He came home with you just now!

*Becky.* What makes you think so?

*Laura.* I saw his back on the steps with you.

*Becky.* Oh, I see—spying on me? Well, you made a mistake in the back.

*Laura.* I know it was Fred Lindon.

*Becky.* And I know it wasn't.

*Laura.* You're not seeing him every day?

*Becky.* Certainly not! But what affair is it of yours, if I do?

*Laura.* We're all friends, and you're making Eve wildly jealous.

*Becky.* That is entirely her own fault, not mine.

*The* Servant *enters Left with a bill on a small silver tray*

*Serv.* Pardon me, madam, a man with a box and a bill to collect.

*Becky* [*taking bill*]. A bandbox?

*She opens bill.*

*Serv.* Yes, madam.

*Becky* [*to* Laura]. Oh, my dear, such a duck of a hat! And only sixty-five dollars. I saw it on my way here and couldn't resist buying. Are hats a passion with you?

*Laura* [*uninterested*]. Yes, rather.

*Becky.* I told them to send it C. O. D., but I didn't suppose it would come till to-morrow and I haven't a cent.

*Laura.* I thought you said you won a hundred and fifty at bridge?

*Becky.* No, no, my dear, you misunderstood me, I lost. [*To* Servant.] Tell the man if he can't leave the box, to take it back and call later; say Mrs. Warder is out.

*Serv.* Yes, madam.

[*Goes out with the bill*

*Laura.* You said you *won* at bridge!

*Becky.* Oh, you tedious person! You hang on to anything like a terrier, don't you! I said I won because I didn't want Eve to think I'd lost; I never can bear to own up I've lost anything before Eve. [*Laughs, pulls* Laura *by the arm.*] Good-by!

*Laura.* I won't go yet.

*Becky* [*urging her*]. You must. I have an engagement.

*Laura.* *With Fred Lindon!*

*Becky.* It is not. [Servant *enters and announces* "Mr. Lindon." Lindon *follows in. He is surprised to see* Laura, *but instantly covers his surprise. Going to* Lindon, *quickly.*] Oh, what a surprise!

*Lin.* Surprise? Am I early?

*Becky* [*indicating* Laura]. Sh! Yes, surprise. [Lindon *sees* Laura *and makes an amused grimace.*] But I can only give you a very few minutes. I have an engagement, haven't I, Laura?

*Lin.* [*as they shake hands.*] Oh, hello, Laura!

*Laura* [*very dryly*]. How d'you do, Fred?

*Lin.* How's Eve?

*Laura* [*embarrassed*]. Very well—at least not very—yes, she is of course very well! She's just left here.

*She adds this pointedly.*

*Lin.* Oh! sorry I missed her! Give her my regards when you see her, and say I'm glad she's well.

*He goes to the piano, sits on the bench, and plays.*

*Laura* [*rises indignant*]. I shall do nothing of the kind.

*She starts to leave the room.* Lindon *runs what he is playing into* "Good-by, little girl, Good-by."

*Becky* [*offering her hand*]. Good-by.

*Laura* [*pretends not to see* Becky's *hand*]. Good-by.

[*She goes out Left*

*Becky* [*going to the piano*]. *They both saw you come back with me!*

*Lin.* [*still playing, improvising. Laughing*]. No! Did they?

*Becky* [*laughing*]. Yes, but it's no laughing matter! Eve is jealous.

*Lin.* [*Stops playing*]. What right has she? Did she expect me to sit alone in the drawing-room for two months straining my ears to hear her ring the front door bell?

*He continues playing.*

*Becky.* They know we've been meeting every day,—at least they think so. *Have* we?

*Lin.* [*still playing*]. No!

*Becky.* Yes, we *have! Haven't* we?

*Lin.* [*Stops playing*]. Well, yes, if you want the truth.

*Becky* [*Goes to sofa and sits*]. There's no use telling a story about it. I've nothing to be ashamed of,—I did it with the best of motives.

*Lin.* [*Goes to* Becky]. Oh, don't spoil it all, Becky, with motives!

*He leans over the arm of the sofa to talk to her.*

*Becky* [*Laughs*]. You know Eve mustn't be jealous of me!

*Lin.* [*earnestly*]. Now you're not going to let her break up our little—

*Becky* [*interrupting*]. Fred, how much do you like me?

*Lin.* [*smiling*]. I daren't tell you!

*Becky.* No, I mean *really!*

*Lin.* So do I!

*Becky.* I believe you are fond of me.

*Lin.* I am!

*Becky.* And I like you to be.

*Lin.* [*placing his hand on hers on the sofa's arm*]. Because?

*Becky* [*slowly drawing her hand from his*]. I like men to like me, even though it really means nothing.

*Lin.* Nothing?

*Rather chagrined.*

*Becky* [*amused*]. I like it for myself, and besides I think it's a compliment to Tom!

*Lin.* [*mockingly*]. Oh! Oh! I say! Becky!

*He moves to the chair Right beside* Becky *and drawing it nearer sits facing her.*

*Becky.* But with you there was a special reason.

*Lin.* [*Is encouraged. Draws a little nearer to her*]. Yes?

*Becky.* Of course you have perfectly understood why I've seen so much of you.

*Lin.* You've been my friend.

*Becky.* I've sympathized with you.

*Lin.* You've been the only real glimpse of happiness I've had for months in my life.

*Becky.* Don't be rhetorical! no man sounds sincere, when he talks pictures. I'll tell you why I wanted you to come back this afternoon.

*Lin.* [*taking her two hands*]. To make me happy!

*Becky* [*pulling her hands away, and patting his half seriously*]. Yes, [*He leans over toward her.*] by making you realize it's time you went to Eve and asked her to come back.

*Lin.* [*sinking back in his chair*]. Nonsense; Eve's made a row and frightened you.

*Becky.* How frightened me? I always meant when I'd got you where I wanted you, to influence you to make it up with Eve. She adores you!

*Lin.* She has an odd way of showing it.

*He rises and leans against the mantel beside the sofa.*

*Becky.* You don't want every woman to show her love in the same way.

*Lin.* I don't want any other woman to show me she loves me in Eve's way.

*Becky.* Come now, you're unfair to Eve! I'm going to sympathize with her a little. Granted that she is jealous, granted that she doesn't always control her temper!—what woman worth while does!

*Lin.* [*laughing*]. But she ought to trust me—as *you* do.

*Becky* [*laughing*]. Oh, I'm not your wife. I wouldn't trust you for a minute if I were married to you!

*Lin.* How about Tom?

*Becky.* Of course I trust Tom.

*Lin.* [*laughing*]. And I trust Eve.

*Becky.* Oh! but it's not the same thing. You trust Eve because you don't care enough. I trust Tom because—well, in one little word, he is perfect and I adore him!

*Lin.* Sounds boring!

*Becky.* Eve's proved she loves you with a *big* love! She's proved it by forgiveness. That's the proof of a love it's not easy to get and even harder to deserve! You've got it—[*He moves toward her.*] we won't go into the deserving part! But if only half that she says and one-quarter of what every one else says of you is true, you ought to go on your knees to her in gratitude if she is willing to take you back.

*Lin.* [*Sits on the arm of sofa, half laughing*]. She will! She's left before.

*Becky.* You love her, Fred?

*Lin.* [*casually*]. No, I love you!

*Becky.* Nonsense! I mean really! Promise me you'll go to Eve to-morrow and ask her to come back.

*Lin.* [*Slides down on to sofa*]. Not yet—give me another month!

*Becky.* You'll lose her!

*Lin.* No, there are certain things you can't lose—try as hard as you like!

*Becky.* That isn't funny.

*Lin.* She's been urging you to do this.

*Becky.* Nothing of the sort! She's too proud. And she mustn't dream I've had anything to do with your going to her. No woman really wants to accept her happiness like a pauper at the Lady Bountiful hands of another woman. She might *think* she was grateful to me, but she wouldn't be! With a disposition like Eve's you'd have another quarrel inside a fortnight. No! Eve must think you've come to her spontaneously because you can't live without her. [*He whistles. She rises.*] You can whistle, but you'll never get another woman half so good to you as Eve! Make her think you want her back. Make *yourself* think you want her back, and you don't know how happy you'll be—first in making her happy and second in finding you are yourself.

*He takes hold of her hand; she draws it away quickly and sits in the arm-chair on the opposite side of the room.*

*Lin.* What are you doing away over there?

*Becky.* Oh, I thought it was getting a little crowded on the sofa.

*Lin.* And must I give up my visits with you?

*Becky.* Of course.

*Lin.* Oh, well, if that's the price, I don't want happiness, it costs too much!

*Becky.* You won't need sympathy any more. You can write me a little note and say: "Becky, I thought I loved you, but it was only a heart being caught on the rebound. Thank you for being sensible and pitching the heart back! Thank you for seeing my real happiness was in making Eve happy."

*Lin.* You know that doesn't sound like me!

*Becky.* Not like your foolish *old you*, but like your sensible *new you*, who has found out you can have a woman friend without getting sued for damages,—which has been your usual experience, I believe!

*Lin.* Becky! Don't rob the graves!

*Becky.* Well, will you go to Eve and beg her to come back?

*Lin.* [*Rises*]. No!

*Becky.* Fred! The price of my friendship is your peace with Eve!

*Lin.* [*going to* Becky]. But if I consent, I may come to see you?

*Becky.* Yes.

*Lin.* Eve, my darling wife, forgive me! Come to my arms and stay there—for five minutes—consider it done! Where, to-morrow?

*Becky.* The Metropolitan?[1]

*Lin.* No, let me come here to-morrow, and what time?

*Becky* [*Rises*]. Four—but to say *Good-by!* [*She means it.*] The *last* visit!

*Lin.* Oh! well, we won't cross that bridge till we come to it! and I'll make you a bet if you ever do send me away for good, do you know what will happen?

*Becky* [*amused*]. No, what?

*Lin.* In a day or two you'd send for me to come again after all!

*Becky* [*laughing*]. Why?

*Lin.* Because you like me better than you think you do!

*Becky* [*going to the writing-table*]. Oh, really!!

*Lin.* [*following her*]. Yes, really! and you know—though you may not acknowledge it to yourself, still you know just how strong my feeling is for you.

*Becky* [*turning toward him*]. But I do acknowledge it, and I am grateful and pleased to have you care for me.

*She pulls the chair beside the table in front of her.*

*Lin.* [*pushing chair away*]. "Care for you!"

*Becky* [*pulling chair back*]. Yes! and I want to show my appreciation by making you happy.

*Lin.* Eve's jealousy has frightened you, but you'll forget it to-morrow!

*Becky* [*really not understanding*]. How do you mean?

*She looks at him questioningly, innocently. He looks back knowingly with a half smile, not believing her. A pause.* Warder *comes in Left. He looks from one to the other, then speaks pleasantly.*

*Ward.* Oh! How are you, Lindon?

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[1] Metropolitan: The Metropolitan Art Gallery.

*Lin.* Good evening, Warder.

*Both men stand; an awkward pause.*

*Becky* [*sitting in the armchair*]. Sit down, Tom.

*He does so on the chair by the table.* Lindon *sits on the sofa. A moment's pause.*

*Lin.* Do you come up town generally as late as this?

*Ward.* Oh, no, I've been up some time.

*Second awkward pause.*

*Becky.* Did you get the theatre tickets?

*Ward.* No, I forgot; I didn't go to the club. I'll telephone from here. [*Very casually.*] Has Mrs. Clayton gone?

*Becky.* Who?

*Ward.* Mrs. Clayton. You said—

*Becky* [*interrupting.*] Mrs. Cl—? Oh! Yes! She's gone.

*Awkward pause.*

*Lin.* Have you been to the club?

*Ward.* [*very casually*]. No, I walked back with your wife to her mother's.

*Awkward pause.* Becky *and* Lindon *exchange glances.*

*Lin.* [*half humorously*]. I hear Eve is looking very well.

*Pause.*

*Ward.* By the way, will you have a whiskey and soda, a cocktail or something?

*Becky.* Or *tea?*

*Lin.* Tea? poison to me! No, thanks, I must be getting on.

*All rise; then, after a moment of embarrassment,* Warder *speaks.*

*Ward.* Yes?

*Lin.* I've an early, melancholy, bachelor's dinner at seven.

*Becky.* It's your own fault! Think how well Eve looks in a dinner dress, and what a delightful hostess she always is.

*Lin.* Yes, Eve's all right in a crowd! [*Shaking hands. To* Warder.] Forgive my domestic affairs intruding. Mrs. Warder has been kind enough to advise me a little! Good-by! [*Going*

*Ward.* I'm sure her advice is good. You'd better take it!

*Lin.* Perhaps!—but in homeopathic doses! [*To* Becky.] Good-by! [*To* Warder.] Bye, Warder.

[*Laughing, he goes out Left.* Warder *and* Becky, *alone, look at each other,—*Becky *questioningly,* Warder *half puzzled*

*Becky.* Well! Has Eve been weeping on *your* bosom, too?

*Ward.* No, I think she *scratched* it, if she did anything!

*Becky* [*half amused, half worried*]. How do you mean? [*The* Servant *enters with a letter which he gives to* Becky.] When did this come?

*Serv.* A little while ago, but madam gave orders not to be interrupted.

[*He goes out.* Warder *gives* Becky *a quick, sharp look, which, however, she doesn't notice*

*Becky.* From father? He can't want more money already!

*Ward.* *You* sent him how much two days ago?

*Becky* [*Goes above the writing-table as she opens the letter*]. *You* sent him, you generous darling, three hundred dollars. I had given him his allowance the beginning of the month.

*Ward.* And gone already! Of course, he's been at the races this week! No more. Becky,—is it true you've been seeing Lindon every day lately?

*Becky* [*while she reads her letter*]. No! —yes! [*Looks up at him.*] I mean no, certainly not!

*Ward.* [*smiling*]. Which is it? or do I take my choice?

*Becky* [*with a little laugh*]. I've seen something of him. I'm sorry for him.—Father's in more trouble.

*Ward.* That's an old story, and this is something new. Eve is jealous of you.

*Becky* [*Looks up at him*]. Are you, of Fred Lindon?

*Ward.* No!

*Becky* [*Goes quickly to him and kisses him and pushes him down on to the sofa*]. Bless you! You're right, and that's my answer to Eve!—Father does want more money!

*Ward.* We send no more till next month, not one penny. Come here! [*He makes her sit on the arm of the sofa beside him. She puts her arm about his neck and hugs him.* Warder *continues.*]

You haven't seen Lindon almost daily for the past month, have you?

*Becky.* No.

*Ward.* You haven't met him by appointment at the Metropolitan, Eden Musée, or any such places?

*Becky.* Eve's jealousy gives her the most ridiculous ideas! When I have been with Mr. Lindon, it has been principally to talk about Eve, and entirely with the desire to try and reconcile them.

*Ward.* Grant that! But it's not true about all these appointments?

*Becky.* No!

*Ward.* [*with his arm about her waist*]. I believe you love me better than all the world?

*Becky.* Than all the world, and every world, and all the planets put together, Mars, Saturn, and Venus. Yes. I love you *even* more than Venus!

*Laughing and giving him another caress.*

*Ward.* I have every confidence in you and your motives. But I have none in Lindon's—so I want to-day's visit to be his last, my dear.

*Becky* [*rising, a little uncomfortable*]. All right.

*Ward.* Own up, now, hasn't he tried to make love to you?

*Becky* [*leaning on the back of the chair, facing him*]. No!

*Ward.* Not a bit?

*Becky* [*smiling*]. Well—maybe—just a tiny bit—but not in earnest.

*Ward.* [*rising, angrily*]. I was sure of it! the damn puppy! Becky, I've heard him swear there's no such thing as a decent woman if a man goes about it in the right way!

*Becky.* Oh, you men are always hard on another man whom women like.

*Ward.* I know what I'm talking about *this* time, and you don't.

*Becky* [*with dignity*]. I judge by his behavior to me. He may have led me to believe he likes me very much,—he ought to like me, I've been very nice to him,—and I suppose it flattered me—[*smiling.*] it always does flatter me when men like me,—and I think one feeling I have is pride that you have a wife whom other men admire! If Mr. Lindon has made—er—respectful love to me, that's a compliment to *you.* [Warder *laughs, sincerely amused.*] But he has *not* insulted me.

*Ward.* [*smiling*]. That's your fault. You are the kind of woman he doesn't believe exists, and he can't make up his mind just what tactics to adopt.

*Becky.* He knows perfectly, unless he's deaf and blind, that my seeing him—a few times only—has been solely to reconcile him with Eve.

*Ward.* That sort of man *is* deaf and blind except to his own rotten mental suggestions. He is incapable of believing in your philanthropic motive, so let it go, dear.

*Becky* [*Places the letter on the writing-table and sits behind it*]. Eve has frightened you!

*Ward.* [*Walks away*]. Not a bit; I laughed at her fears that you were fascinated by her precious worm! But I do consider that unwittingly you have been playing a dangerous and—forgive me, darling—[*going to her.*] a very foolish game. Already some one believes you've been seeing Lindon every day. You haven't! But that doesn't make any difference! Every one will believe you have seen him twice a day in another month if you continue seeing him at all. No woman can have the "friendship" of a man like Lindon for long without—justly or unjustly—paying the highest price for it. [*He places his hand tenderly on her shoulder.*] You wouldn't know what the price was till the bill came in,—and then no matter how well you knew and those who love you knew you had not danced, all the same the world would make you pay the piper!

*Becky.* I do your sex greater justice than you! I don't believe there's any man, no matter what he has been, whom some sincere woman can't waken to some good that is in him!

*Ward.* [*smiling*]. That's all right, but you please let Eve wake up Lindon! [*He moves away.*] Had you made any arrangements to ring a little friendly alarm on him to-morrow?

*Becky.* No! And that, of course, was Eve's suggestion!

*Ward.* Well, never mind so long as it's understood his visits here are at an end. You don't expect him to-morrow, and should he come, you won't see him, eh?

*Becky.* Exactly! [*Smiling.*] When I told him to-day his visits were over, what do you think he said?

*Ward.* I couldn't guess.

*Becky.* He said I'd change my mind and send for him!

*Ward.* And if you did, do you know what he would do?

*Becky.* No,—what?

*Ward.* Consider it a signal of capitulation,—and ten to one take you in his arms and kiss you!

*Becky* [*Rises*]. He wouldn't dare!

*Ward.* I'm not sure, but at any rate I am serious about one thing in this discussion.

*Becky* [*Goes to him and places her hands lovingly on his arms*]. Our first "domestic row."

*Ward.* [*Turns her about and holds her in his arms,—she leans against him*]. And last!

*Becky.* Amen!

*Ward.* [*very seriously*]. And I echo the sentiment, I know, of every sane husband in New York—Lindon's attentions to a man's wife are an insult, and as your husband I won't have them.

*Becky* [*leaving his arms, pushes him playfully into a chair and sits near him in the corner of the sofa*]. Well, give me my woman's last word. I still think you are unfair to him—but I love you all the same!!

*Ward.* You'd better!

*Becky.* I'm so afraid you'll get—not tired, but—well—too used to me!

*Ward.* Not till I find you twice the same! Now,—what about your father?

*Becky.* He only wants fifty dollars, and says he must have it; let's send it.

*Ward.* No, that's the way it's been always. Our "no" has always ended "yes," so of course he hasn't believed in it. This time it must stay "no."

*Becky* [*plaintively*]. You won't send it?

*Ward.* No, and you mustn't.

*Becky.* Oh, I haven't got a cent. But he says he's in real trouble and he must have it.

*Ward.* It's always the same thing! And we must put a stop to his inveterate, indiscriminate gambling. If we don't teach him the lesson he needs soon, before we know it he will be in real trouble that ten thousand times fifty dollars mightn't get him out of.

*Becky.* But he promises not to—

*Ward.* [*interrupting*]. My dear! He has given his word over and over again, and broken it twice as many times! If it isn't a race course, it's a bucket shop[1] —or some cheap back door roulette table, and it's got to stop! Stop now!

*Becky.* But, Tom—

*Ward.* [*interrupting*]. Now, Becky! You know how hard it is for me to refuse you.

*Becky.* It's only—

*Ward.* [*interrupting*]. You must trust my judgment, and your father must learn, and a small matter of fifty dollars is a good chance to begin; it can't be so very serious! so that's ended.

*Becky* [*half humorously, half discouragedly*]. Yes, I guess it's ended!

*Ward.* Now, will you try to realize that I only want to do what's best and right?

*Becky* [*Kisses him*]. Yes, but I can't help feeling sorry for father. [*Smiling.*]

*The* SERVANT *enters Left with a bill and a bandbox*

*Serv.* Beg pardon, madam, but the man has come back.

*Becky* [*Takes the bill*]. Oh, my hat. Very well, I'll ring when I'm ready! Leave the box on the chair.

*Serv.* [*Puts bandbox on the chair at Left*]. Very good, madam.

[*He goes out*

*Becky* [*smiling, embarrassed*]. I'm nearly as bad as father!

*Ward.* Lose at bridge to-day?

*Becky.* No, I didn't play to-day, but I couldn't resist a hat, my dear, the most adorable hat! [WARDER *laughs*

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[1] bucket shop: a place where irregular stock exchange business is carried on in the form of gambling on the rise and fall of stocks or shares without any actual buying or selling. It is merely betting on the possible fluctuations of the market.

“Oh, Becky.”] No, honestly! Much more beautiful than the one I bought day before yesterday! I'm ashamed, but I did order it to come home, and I haven't a penny.

*Ward.* [*teasing her*]. Send it back!

*Becky.* Oh, you wouldn't be so heartless! and what would they think at the shop?

*Ward.* [*getting out his pocketbook*]. How much is it?

*Becky.* [*Hesitates a moment*]. Fifty dollars!

*Ward.* [*with a slight quizzing look*]. Just what your father wants.

*Becky.* Yes! Give the money to father and I'll send back the bonnet.

*Ward.* No, my darling. You know it isn't the money with your father, it's the principle of the thing. I've not got the money, I must write a check.

*He looks for the check book. She quickly gets a check book from table and hides it behind her back.*

*Becky.* Your check book's upstairs.

*She rings the bell on the desk.*

*Ward.* I thought perhaps yours was here?

*Becky.* No, mine's used up, as usual!

*Ward.* All right.

[*He goes out Right, as the* Servant *enters*

*Becky* [*opening the bandbox*]. Send the man here, Jenks.

*Serv.* Yes, madam.

[*He goes out, Left*

*Becky* [*Takes out the hat and looks at it admiringly*]. What a duck! [*Heaves a great sigh and puts it back and starts to re-tie the strings, as the* Man *enters.*] I want you to take this back to Mme. Flora, and say Mrs. Warder is extremely sorry, but Mr. Warder has taken a violent dislike to the hat, so she cannot have it. She will be in later to choose another.

*Man.* Yes, ma'am.

[*He goes out with the bandbox, Left.* Becky *sits down and starts to write a letter hurriedly.* Warder *comes in with check.* Becky *hides the letter she is writing*

*Ward.* [*coming to the table*]. Here's the check, all but the name of the payee. Where's the bill?

*Becky.* Make it out to me, and I'll endorse it.

*Ward.* Why?

*Becky.* O dear! [*Half worried, half smiling.*] I told you a sort of fib! The hat was only thirty-five dollars, but I wanted the extra fifteen for something else. Please don't be angry—

*Ward.* [*laughing*]. I'm not angry, though you know I dislike even little fibs. Why didn't you tell me if you're hard up? I'll give you this and make out another for the bonnet shop.

*Becky.* No, you needn't do that; the man's gone now for the change,—I told him.

*Ward.* [*Finishes the check and gives it to her*]. Becky! you're not going to send this to your father? I forbid that.

*Becky.* No, no, darling! [*Takes the check.*] And now you get dressed. I'll be up in a minute. You know it always takes you twice as long as it does me when you wear a white tie! It's a long play and begins early.

*Ward.* I'll bet you I'll be dressed before you start!

[*He hurries out, Right*

*Becky* [*Rings the telephone on the desk*]. Hello! Hello, 6304-72d. [*Writes on her interrupted letter with one hand and listens with the receiver in the other. After a moment.*] Hello! 6304-72d? Is Mr. Lindon—yes, ask him to come to the 'phone and speak to 2759-38th. [*Listens as she writes.*] Hello! Is that you? Yes—yes—Oh, [*Laughs.*] don't be silly! I called you to say I am very sorry, but our engagement for tomorrow is off! O double f! No, for good! For *Good!* [*She adds very quickly.*] Good-by! [*Hangs up the receiver and writes. In a moment the telephone bell rings furiously; at first she ignores it; then she makes a grimace at it; then she takes up the receiver.*] Hello! No, Central, I wasn't cut off. No, I don't want the number back, thank you, I hung up the receiver. I can't help that! You needn't re-connect us—say the line is busy! [*Hangs up the receiver.*] Mercy! when you don't want them!! [*Rings the electric bell on the desk, endorses the check, puts it in the letter, and seals the envelope.*

*The* Servant *enters as she addresses letter.*] I want you to take this at once and put a special delivery stamp on it. I want it to reach my father in Baltimore to-night.

*Serv.* Yes, madam.

*Becky.* Have you any idea whether it would be delivered there to-night or to-morrow morning?

*Serv.* One or the other, madam.

*Becky* [*smiling*]. That I know! Make haste.

[*The* Servant *goes out Left, as* Warder *all dressed, save that his tie hangs loose, rushed in, Right. She rises quickly*

*Ward.* Who's ready first?

*Becky* [*laughing*]. Oh, you've raced! But while you're tying your tie I'll—

*Ward.* [*Interrupts*]. No, I came down purposely to get you to tie it for me!

*He stands ready.*

*Becky* [*Ties it during the following speeches*]. You forgive me for telling you that little fib?

*Ward.* Yes, if it's to be your last one.

*Becky.* My *very* last.

*Ward.* No more of those wicked little white lies, even, that you know you do amuse yourself with, and distress me?

*Becky.* No, no! Really! I've opened the cage door and let all the little white mice fibs out for good!

*Ward.* And you do love me?

*Becky.* Do you want to know how much I love you?

*Ward.* Yes, how much?

*Becky.* How deep is the ocean in its deepest spot?

*Ward.* As deep as your love for me.

*Becky.* Oh, that isn't fair! You're stealing my thunder! There! [*The tie is finished, and she pushes him playfully into the chair by the writing-table.*] One good turn deserves another. [*With her arms about his neck she slides on to his knee, like a child.*] I've let Perkins go out, and you *must* hook me up the back.

*And both laugh gayly as he embraces her and*

THE CURTAIN FALLS.

## ACT II

*The same scene as Act I.* Becky *and* Warder *are sitting on the sofa, both drinking coffee after lunch.* Warder *puts his coffee cup on the table as the curtain rises.*

*Becky.* Aren't you going to smoke, darling?

*Putting her coffee on the table behind her.*

*Ward.* Yes.

*Getting out cigar.*

*Becky.* Give it to me. [*She takes it, and cuts the tip with a gold jewelled cutter which she wears on a chain about her neck.*] For six years you've not smoked a cigar in my presence that I haven't clipped, have you?

*Ward.* No, And how about anybody else's cigars? That hasn't cut off any tips for—Lindon, I hope!

*Becky.* No indeed! He only smokes cigarettes.

*Ward.* [*amused*]. Is that the only reason?

*Becky.* Oh, you darling! I believe you are a little jealous of Lindon and I adore you for it.

*Hugging and kissing him.*

*Ward.* Well, you go on adoring, but I'm not a bit jealous of Lindon.

*Rises, and lights his cigar with a match from the table behind them.*

*Becky.* You're not going back to the office? It's Saturday.

*Ward.* No—I think I'll have a game of racquets with Billy Weld.

*Becky.* Do! You love it so. I've regretted their invitation to dine with them next week, Friday. I said we're going out of town.

*Ward.* But we're not. We've people dining here, haven't we?

*Becky.* Yes, but I think going out of town sounds so much more interesting. Besides, then they can't possibly be offended that they aren't asked here. Grace'll be consumed with curiosity, too, as to where we're going! [*Amused.*]

*Ward.* But if they see us Friday?

*Becky.* They'll think we haven't gone yet.

*Ward.* But if Billy meets me down town Saturday morning?

*Becky.* He'll think you took an early train back.

*Ward.* The truth's so simple, so much easier—why not tell it?

*Becky.* Don't worry, it'll be all right. I'm sorry I told you if you're going to worry!

*He goes to kiss her; she stops him.*

*Ward.* [*sitting beside her*]. What's up?

*Becky.* I've decided I kiss you too often. I'm a shop-keeper with only one line of goods—no variety, and I'm cheapening my wares. [Warder *laughs.*] I don't want you to feel you're getting a left-over stock of stale, shopworn kisses! I want you to feel the supply doesn't equal the demand.

*She kisses him. The* Servant *enters and they move apart.*

*Serv.* Mrs. Lindon to see Mr. Warder.

*Becky* [*to* Warder]. Eve! [*To* Servant.] Ask her to come in here and have a cup of coffee and a cigarette.

*Serv.* Yes, madam. [*Goes out*

*Becky* [*beaming*]. Come to tell us of the reconciliation!

*Ward.* Why she didn't let him go and be thankful! I don't see what she can love in a little outsider like Lindon!

*Becky.* Thank Heaven all women don't love the same kind of a man! [*Steals a caress.*] Think what an awful fight there'd be!

*Serv.* [*coming back*]. Mrs. Lindon sends this message—she wishes to see *Mr.* Warder.

Becky *and* Warder *look at each other surprised and amused.* Becky *makes a grimace.*

*Ward.* Very well, show Mrs. Lindon in.

*Serv.* Yes, sir. [*Goes out*

*Ward.* More trouble!

*Becky.* They've quarrelled again already! It must have been his fault.

Servant *shows in* Mrs. Lindon *and goes out*

*Mrs. Lin.* [*to* Warder, *not noticing* Becky]. How do you do?

*Ward.* How do you do, Eve?

*Becky.* How do you do, Eve! Sit down.

*Mrs. Lin.* I wish to see Tom for a moment, Becky.

*Becky.* What for?

*Mrs. Lin.* I wish to see him alone.

*Becky.* Why?

*Mrs. Lin.* That, Becky, is my affair—and *his* perhaps!

*Becky.* Oh, really! I suppose I ought to become very jealous now, and do dreadful things. [*Smiles.*] But don't have me for a moment on your mind, Tom.

[*Kisses her finger, puts it to Tom's lips, he kisses it, and she goes out Right*

*Ward.* What is it, Eve? You know I have no earthly secrets from Becky.

*Mrs. Lin.* It's about her secrets from you!

*Ward.* Nonsense! [*Half laughs.*]

*Mrs. Lin.* [*sitting in the chair by the table*]. I only hinted at things the other day—and only hinted at one-half the truth.

*Ward.* [*sitting on the sofa*]. Excuse me, Eve, but you've got hold of the wrong half. I asked Becky outright—that is our way always. She denied practically all you said.

*Mrs. Lin.* You can't make me believe you've lived as long as you have with Becky Roland and not found out—she lies.

*Ward.* [*Rises quickly in anger*]. It's because you're a woman you dare say that to me, but you know I don't have to listen to you, so don't push our old friendship's claim too far.

*Mrs. Lin.* I said Becky and Fred met often on the sly.

*Ward.* [*sitting again*]. Which isn't true!

*Mrs. Lin.* No! They meet *every day!*

*Ward.* Eve, I think your trouble has gone to your brain.

*Mrs. Lin.* [*still quietly, but with the quiet of the crater when the volcano is alive beneath*]. I can prove to you that Becky has seen Fred every day and more than that! When we had our talk two days ago, they had agreed together that he was to go through a form of reconciliation with me for appearance' sake, and their meetings were to continue. She had an appointment with him for yesterday.

*Ward.* That I know isn't true, for she swore to me the opposite.

*Mrs. Lin.* Yes, you frightened her off and she broke the engagement by telephone, which made Fred perfectly furious!

*Ward.* [*Rising, goes to mantel and knocks his cigar ashes into the grate; absolutely unconvinced, he continues with a cynical smile*]. And how did you obtain this decidedly intimate information?

*Mrs. Lin.* [*in an outburst, the volcano becoming a little active*]. From him! I knew they hadn't met for two days—

*Ward.* [*interrupting*]. How?

*He looks up curiously.*

*Mrs. Lin.* [*Rises and turns away a little ashamed*]. I've had Fred watched for weeks!

*Ward.* [*Astonished, rises*]. You mean you've—

*He hesitates.*

*Mrs. Lin.* Yes! [*Coming to the desk, and speaking across it to him.*] I took their not meeting for a sign that after all Becky had given him up, and I had the impulse to go to him—to go back home. He turned on me like a wolf—said I'd meddled with his affairs once too often—that I'd frightened Becky into breaking off with him, that he had been on the point of making up with me for the reason I've told you, but now it was done for! I'd raised your suspicions, I'd given the whole thing away to everybody, and I could congratulate myself on having broken off his and my relations for good—forever! Oh, how could he insult me so when it was only his love I was asking for?

*She sinks down in the chair above the table, and buries her face in her hands and sobs.*

*Ward.* [*Forgets himself and exclaims*]. But how can you—how can you still care for him after everything you've gone through? It's beyond my understanding!

*He throws his cigar angrily into the fireplace.*

*Mrs. Lin.* The history of the world is full of women who love like me, but no men—I don't know why; but I suppose that's why you can't understand it. Why couldn't he realize it is for happiness, not appearances, I've been fighting? And now it's over, for I know when he means what he says—and he told me, like a low brute, I could go to—where you can imagine—for all he cares, or for all he'll ever live with me again.

*Her voice fills up again.*

*Ward.* I should think if you went to the address he proposed, it would insure at least an eventual meeting!

*Mrs. Lin.* [*who has not heard and does not understand*]. What?

*Ward.* I beg your pardon! I made a foolish joke! Well? [*With a hearty long breath of relief.*] Now do you feel better?

*Mrs. Lin.* [*feebly, not understanding*]. Better?

*Ward.* Yes, now you've got it all "off your chest"? To-morrow you'll be all right and ready to forgive again. Shall I call Becky? [*Going toward the bell beside the mantel.*]

*Mrs. Lin.* [*Rises*]. You're going to accuse her before me?

*Ward.* [*Stops and turns*]. Accuse her? [*Laughs.*] No—I don't believe a word you've told me. I'd take Becky's unspoken denial against Fred's sworn statement any day.

*Mrs. Lin.* [*going to him*]. Then here's yesterday's report from the agency!—and Thursday's, and Thursday's includes the report of the telephone central who connected Becky with our house when she broke off the appointment with Fred,—that telephone girl has told us many interesting things!

*Ward.* Stop! Stop this! I won't listen to you—at any rate not behind Becky's back. I'm not a jealous, suspicious woman with good reason to believe the worst. I'm a straightforward, decent man, I hope, and I know I've every reason to believe absolutely in my wife, God bless her! [*He moves away and then turns upon her.*] Why have you come and told me this, anyway?

*Mrs. Lin.* [*staggered*]. Why—why?

*Ward.* [*angry*]. Yes, why? to me of all people! I was the last person you should have told, as a matter of breeding, as a matter of tact, as a matter of the friendship you talk about.

*Mrs. Lin.* But that was just it!

*Ward.* Do you dream what it would mean to me to shake even by a miserable tremor my confidence in my wife? But you haven't!

*Mrs. Lin.* I thought, and I still think, it's to your advantage to know.

*Ward.* [*with a complete change of voice, from anger to the tone one adopts with a silly child*]. My dear Eve, while I don't for a minute excuse him, still I do now understand, perhaps, how even Fred Lindon must have found your ideas of devotion at times over the endurance line.

*Mrs. Lin.* You don't understand,—I thought if you knew everything, together we could separate them—could arrange something.

*Ward.* Eve! believe me, there's nobody to separate in this case; there's nothing, so far as I and mine are concerned, to arrange.

*He goes again to the bell by the mantel.*

*Mrs. Lin.* Who are you going to ring for?

*Ward.* You know.

*Mrs. Lin.* [*stopping him quickly*]. Not before me! I don't want to see her humiliated. I don't want a public revenge or triumph; that's not the feeling I have.

*Ward.* What in the world do you mean? [*He rings.*] Becky will deny the—

*Mrs. Lin.* [*interrupting*]. Very likely! But these proofs are incombatible, and if that's her attitude, I shall go straight from your door to the divorce court.

*She places the envelope of reports on the table with a blow.*

*Ward.* [*Goes to her*]. You're mad! If your proofs are all right, then Becky'll not deny, she'll explain them. You forget you can only see everything red now, but I'm sane and quiet and sure [*smiling.*] and I see things in their true colors. You must be guided by me in this. [*He takes her hand almost cruelly and speaks strongly, with the manner and voice of the man who is and means to remain master.*] Do you understand that? [*She draws her hand away as if in pain.*] I beg your pardon. I am afraid you are one of those dangerous "well-meaning" persons who do more harm than the people who are purposely malicious. You are to take no step without my sanction.

BECKY *comes in with a certain air of bravado*

*Becky.* Excuse me, I heard the bell and I was waiting—am I right?

*Ward.* [*Goes to her*]. Come right in, dear.

*Becky.* Well! has Eve thrown a bomb, or a trump card? Am I to be taken into the secret or conspiracy or what?

*Ward.* [*after a second's pause, in which he thinks how to begin*]. Eve has convinced herself, and would convince me, of some very—[*He thinks for the word.*] wrong—worse than wrong things, but I prefer to be convinced of the contrary by you. And I prefer to come to you with my confidence, my conviction complete. And together we'll try to keep Eve from harming others as well as herself and Lindon—the latter seems unavoidable. [EVE *pushes her papers on the desk pointedly nearer to him. He ignores them.*] Eve says you've not been seeing Lindon often, but every day.

*Becky.* Do you want me to deny it?

*Ward.* [*indulgently*]. I want you to tell the truth.

*Becky.* Of course the accusation and the idea behind it are absurd. [WARDER *turns and looks at* MRS. LINDON, *who meets his glance and then looks down at the evidence on the table, pushing the papers a little farther toward him. He does not follow her glance.* BECKY *half laughs.*] It's like a trial, isn't it? By what right does Eve—

*Mrs. Lin.* [*interrupting*]. The supreme right of any married woman who cares for her husband. Shall I be more explicit?

*Becky.* No, you needn't trouble! What next, Tom?

*Ward.* Eve claims you had an engagement with Fred—

*Hesitates, trying to remember the day.*

*Mrs. Lin.* [*quickly*]. Day before yesterday.

*Ward.* Which you broke off over the telephone.

*Becky.* How does she know that? Does she tap our wire? Merciful Heavens, Eve, you've become so morbid over your trouble your mind's diseased on the subject of Fred—and everybody else apparently.

*Mrs. Lin.* Ha!

*Ward.* But is this true, Becky?

*Becky* [*to gain time*]. Is what true?

*Ward.* About this appointment with Fred which you broke over the—

*Becky* [*interrupting*]. Of course not!

*Ward.* [*who begins to doubt her*]. If it were, you could easily explain it, I'm sure.

*Hoping to suggest this course to her.*

*Becky* [*her head lost*]. Of course—but there's nothing to explain! The whole thing's false! What do you take me for, Eve? If you think I'm a home destroyer, you've made a mistake in the bird! And what do you mean by coming into my precious home and trying to make trouble for me?

*Sitting on the sofa, frightened and almost in tears.*

*Ward.* Wait a minute, Becky, it's partly my fault.

*Becky.* It is not! I know whose fault it is, and I must say that, at last, I don't blame Fred Lindon!

*Mrs. Lin.* Oh!

*Becky.* There! I'm sorry I said that. When I'm excited like this I speak the truth straight out, no matter what happens!

*Ward.* Well really it was I who insisted on your joining us, against Eve's will. [*To* MRS. LINDON]. Your way was best. It was my man's point of view—[*to* BECKY.] and you are right, under the circumstances, no doubt, to answer as you do.

*Becky.* My dear Tom, there's no other way to answer.

*Ward.* [*Looks at her, then takes up the envelope containing the detective reports and holds them tightly in his hand. He comes down to* MRS. LINDON]. If you will leave us alone, I will go over the whole matter with Becky,—by ourselves will be much better.

*Mrs. Lin.* I need hardly tell you those papers are most valuable to me.

*Becky.* [*looking up, her curiosity aroused*]. What papers?

*Nobody answers her. She tries to see.*

*Mrs. Lin.* Will you promise me not to let them out of your hands till you put them back into mine?

*Ward.* I will.

*Mrs. Lin.* [*As she moves to go, stops*]. You will find the entries which are of particular interest to you marked on the margin with a red cross!

*Ward.* [*satirically*]. Thank you!

[BECKY *rises and rings for the* SERVANT. MRS. LINDON *goes out*

*Becky* [*coming to meet* WARDER]. I think I'm a pretty good-natured woman to let Eve—

*Ward.* [*Stands before* BECKY *with his hands on her shoulders, making her look straight into his eyes*]. Now be careful, dearest. You've married a man who doesn't understand a suspicious nature—who has every confidence in you and the deepest—a confidence that couldn't be easily disturbed; but once it was shaken, every unborn suspicion of all the past years would spring to life full-grown and strong at their birth, and God knows if my confidence could ever come back. It never has in any of the smaller trials of it I've made in my life. So you'll be careful, won't you, dearest? I mean even in little things. My faith in you is what gives all the best light to my life, but it's a live wire—neither you nor I can afford to play with it.

*Goes to the writing table and takes the papers out of* EVE'S *envelope.*

*Becky.* Tom, you frighten me! Eve has made you jealous again. [*Goes to him and puts both arms about his neck.*] Now, my darling, I give you my word of honor I love only you and never have loved Fred Lindon and never could! Say you believe me!

*Ward.* Haven't I always believed you?

*Becky.* Ye - - s.

*Ward.* But if I find your word of honor is broken in one thing, how can I ever trust it in another?

*Becky.* Of course you can't,—but you needn't worry, because it won't be broken.

*Ward.* Then, now we're alone, tell me the truth, which you didn't tell me when you said you'd not seen Lindon often.

*Becky* [*Turns away*]. It was the truth. I haven't—so very often.

*Ward.* Not every day?

*Becky* [*Sits in the chair by the writing-table*]. How could I?

*Ward.* Nor telephoned him Thursday, breaking off an engagement *after you told me absolutely you'd parted with him for good—and had no appointment?*

*Becky.* Of course not! The idea! [*But she shows she is a little worried.*] Eve Lindon never could tell the truth!

*Ward.* The telephone girl must have lied too or else the statement was made out of whole cloth.

*Throwing the envelope on the desk.*

*Becky.* What statement?

*Ward.* [*sitting on sofa*]. From these detectives.

*He begins to look through the papers.*

*Becky.* Detectives! [*Stunned.*] What detectives?

*Picks up envelope and looks at it, puts it back on desk.*

*Ward.* Eve's, who have shadowed her husband for the past two months.

*Becky* [*thoroughly alarmed*]. You don't mean—

*Ward.* [*Interrupts, not hearing what* Becky *says; his thoughts on the papers which he is reading, he speaks very quietly*]. These certainly do make out a case of daily meetings for you two.

*Becky.* It's not true!

*Ward.* Though not so very many *here.*

*Turning over a fresh paper.*

*Becky* [*Rises, gets above desk*]. All! All the meetings there have been,—practically. This is simply awful! Eve is capable of making the most terrific scandal for nothing. Don't let her, Tom, will you? Tear those things up!

*Ward.* [*smiling indulgently, not taking her seriously*]. Becky!

*Becky* [*Leaning over the table, stretches out her hand toward him*]. Well, let me! Let me take them from you without your noticing till it's too late!

*Ward.* [*seriously*]. You're not serious?

*Becky.* I am!

*Ward.* You heard me give Eve my word?

*Becky.* To a mad woman like that it doesn't count.

*Ward.* I wonder just how much your word does count with you, Becky!

*Becky* [*with great and injured dignity*]. It counts everything!

*Ward.* They seem to have hit on some very out-of-the-way places for your rendezvous. [*He smiles.*] Where is Huber's museum?

*Becky.* Why, it's down on Fourteenth —[*She interrupts herself quickly.*] I don't know where it is!

*She moves away to collect herself.*

*Ward.* [*still smiling*]. And why the Washington Heights Inn in February? Or the Eden Musée ever?

*Becky.* Of course some one else has been mistaken for me.

*Ward.* [*Looks up*]. Ah! yes, that's a very possible idea.

*Becky* [*Goes to the sofa and sits beside him*]. Tom, don't read any more of the horrid things! Listen to me, don't let Eve go on. She'll ruin everything if she does. He'll never forgive her, never take her back.

*Ward.* [*reading and smiling*]. I didn't know you skated!

*Becky.* I always loved skating. I only gave it up because it bored you. But I didn't skate then!

*Ward.* When?

*Becky.* I—I don't—oh, whenever that beast says!

*Ward.* St. Nicholas Rink, Friday, February eighteenth. [*He has noticed the slip she made, but hides the fact; he speaks as he goes on reading.*] Eve and her husband have had a big row, and he swears he'll never see her again, not even in the other place, that she's come between you and him and that he'll never forgive.

*He finishes seriously, his bantering manner gone.*

*Becky.* Oh, how untrue! I don't believe he said any such thing. Eve's jealous mind has distorted something else. The reason for our friendship—[*He rises with a half-angry movement, goes above the table looking for the envelope.*] such as it is—was to bring Eve and him together.

*Ward.* From *your* point of view.

*Becky.* No, believe me, he isn't as bad as you think.

*Ward.* [*showing the papers*]. And what about these? They agree with me.

*Becky.* If you believe those papers about him, then you must believe them about me.

*Ward.* [*coming to her*]. Heaven forbid, Becky! They would prove you a liar and a terrible one—which you're *not, are you?*

*Becky.* How can you ask?

*Ward.* If these were true—if I thought you had deceived me to such an extent—I could never trust you again so long as I lived, Becky.

*Becky.* Shall you speak to Mr. Lindon about them?

*Ward.* No, I wouldn't insult you by discussing you with Lindon, unless I was convinced every word and more here was true. I will see Eve to-morrow and perhaps get hold of these detectives myself.

*Becky* [*almost trembling with dread*]. And now go and have your game. You need it! You're getting morbid. You'll be believing these beastly things if you don't get some exercise.

*Ward.* What time is it?

*Becky* [*She looks at clock on the mantel, and speaks with her face still away from him*]. Three. When will you be back?

*She conceals her anxiety to hear his answer.*

*Ward.* Oh, six, I suppose.

*Becky* [*facing him with a certain relief*]. Not till six—you're sure?

*Ward.* Yes, you know your father's coming and there's no necessity of my seeing him.

*Becky.* Oh! I forgot all about father's telegram! If it's money, I'm to be firm?

*Ward.* Absolutely.

*Becky* [*taking hold of the envelope which he has in his left hand away from her*]. What are you going to do with those?

*Ward.* You heard me tell Eve they shouldn't go out of my hands except into hers.

*He gently but firmly removes her hand from the envelope.*

*Becky.* And you meant it?

*Ward.* Don't you mean a promise you give like that?

*Becky.* Yes, of course . . . .

*Ward.* [*taking out his keys*]. I'm going to put them away in my room. I want to have a thorough, careful look through them later. Of course I can't let it rest here. The detectives must learn their mistake at once.

*Becky.* Yes, of course. But you are going to the Welds' now for your game?

*Ward.* Yes, good-by.

*Presses her hand. Gives her a tender but questioning look, but does not kiss her, and then goes out.*

*Becky.* He's begun to distrust me already. Dear God in Heaven, if I ever get out of this, I'll never tell another lie so long as I live! [*She turns to the window. Smiles to* Warder *outside and throws him a kiss, but afterward her face at once assumes its frightened look. Coming from the window, she sinks upon the piano stool.*] *He's* got to save me! Now he can prove that he is worthy a decent woman's friendship. [*She goes to the telephone and calls.*] Hello! Hello! [*She suddenly realizes.*] But I can't use the telephone! Central has told things already! [*She hangs up the receiver. The telephone bell rings.*] I must write him. [*The bell rings again. She takes up the receiver and speaks angrily.*] Hello? . . . No, I didn't ring. You've made a mistake. [*Hangs up the receiver.*] You telltale toad you! [*She writes.*] "If this note reaches you in time, please come over"—I ought to be able to get rid of father in half an hour—[*She looks up at the clock.*] "at half-past three." [*Seals note and addresses it.*] "Important." [*Which she underlines.*]

*Serv.* [*entering Left, announces*]. Mr. Roland.

Roland *is an elderly, dried-up little man with an air of the dandy jockey still clinging to him underneath his gray hairs and dyed moustache. A vivid carnation is in his buttonhole and a somewhat rusty springiness in his gait.*

*Roland* [*coming in jauntily*]. Hello, Beck!

*Becky* [*with fictitious spirit*]. Father!

*He starts to kiss her, forgetting the ever present cigarette in his mouth; then he stops to remove it, and does kiss her.*

*Rol.* How are you?

*Becky.* I'm awfully glad to see you, but you can't stay long. Excuse me just a moment. Jenks, I want you to ring for a messenger and give him—[*Stops.*] no, when he comes, send him to me.

*She has started to give* Jenks *the note, but changes her mind.* Jenks *bows and turns to leave.*

*Rol.* I say, Becky, might I have a glass of brandy? I took coffee after lunch on the train and it's poisoned me. Must have been canned coffee!

*Becky.* Very well, Jenks.

[*The* Servant *goes out Left*

*Rol.* [*lolling on the sofa*]. What the devil did you mean by sending me fifty dollars instead of five hundred?

*Becky* [*surprised*]. I read it fifty! I never dreamed you'd ask for five hundred more!

*Going toward him.*

*Rol.* I wrote five hundred and I must have it!

*Becky.* My dear father, it's impossible. I tried as it was to get a little more from Tom, but he said "no," to send you the fifty dollars, with his love, but not one penny more, and to make you understand—and, father, he means it—that for the future you must keep within your allowance.

*The* Servant *enters with the brandy on a salver, and pours out a liqueur glass full*

*Rol.* But *you'll* help me?

*Becky* [*sitting on the opposite end of the sofa*]. No, he forbids it, and in the future I'm going to do what Tom wishes, and never deceive him even in a little thing again. [*To the* Servant *who hands the glass of brandy to* Roland.] The messenger boy hasn't come yet?

*Serv.* No, madam.

*Becky.* If he doesn't come in five minutes, ring again.

*Serv.* Yes, madam.

[*Starting to go,* Roland *stops him*

*Rol.* Not so fast!

*He points to the glass which he has emptied and the* Servant *pours out another glass.* Roland *takes it and puts it on the table behind him. The* Servant *busies himself with gathering up the after-dinner coffee cups and trying to overhear all that he can.*

*Becky.* How is Mrs. Crespigny?

*Rol.* That woman will be the death or the marriage of me!

*Becky.* Don't be absurd, father! She's given you the most comfortable home you've had for years. In that letter she wrote me she said she'd been a real mother to you.

*Rol.* The *mother* is a blind, a false lead to hide her hand! her trumps are marriage.

*Becky.* Nonsense! Mrs. Crespigny must realize the difference in your positions.

*Rol.* You haven't lived with her social souvenirs as I have for four years! [*The* Servant *starts to take up the glass which* Roland *has put aside, but the latter stops him. The* Servant *has delayed over his work as long as he dares in his desire to listen, and now goes out Left.*] Becky, are you and Tom hungering for a mother-in-law?

*Becky.* I don't know what you mean?

*Rol.* It's a question of five hundred dollars for me or a new Mrs. Roland!

*Becky* [*astounded*]. You don't mean you owe Mrs. Crespigny that money?

*Rol.* Well, I've not paid my board bill as regularly as I might have wished.

*Becky* [*Rises, indignant*]. I'm ashamed of you!

*Rol.* I'm ashamed of myself, but shame won't pay bills; if it would, there'd have been many an unpaid debt washed off the slate in this world.

*The* Servant *returns with a* Messenger Boy

*Serv.* The messenger, madam.

Becky *goes to the boy. During* Becky's *talk with the* Messenger, Roland *fills his pocket with cigars from the box on the table.*

*Becky.* I want you to take this note to its address, but only leave it in case the gentleman is in. Do you understand?

*Messenger.* Yes, ma'am.

*Becky.* And come back and tell me.

*Mess.* Yes, ma'am.

[*He goes out with the* Servant, *who has waited for him*

*Rol.* I confess, my child, I have flirted a little with the dame in question.

*Becky.* Father!

*Rol.* I have, in a way, led her on!

*Becky.* And you always told me my mother's memory was the one precious thing left, that you meant to keep always untouched by your life!

*Rol.* I don't deny, Becky, I'd be ashamed of it. I don't pretend Mrs. Crespigny would be a solace or a substitute; she would, at the best perhaps, be a resource,—but what she threatens to become unless I pay is a legal necessity!

*Becky. Could* she do that?

*Rol.* I have been obliged at times by desperate need of ready money to suggest to her certain things as probabilities which were barely remote possibilities! And unfortunately—*unfortunately*—once or twice in writing.

*Becky.* She has compromising letters of yours?

*Rol.* She has a large collection of illustrated postal cards from every place I've been since I've lodged with her,—they are her chief artistic dissipation—and a double set of Baltimore Duplicates,[1] which I am afraid are the most foolish; as I am in the habit of making up with her in that way after little tiffs when she takes the stand of not being on speaking terms with me.

*Becky.* Father! You've been a terrible idiot.

*Rol.* I have, my dear!

*Becky.* Can't you get those cards back?

*Rol.* The rent due is "Mother's" price for them. [*Rising.*] You will make Tom give it to me, won't you? and I'll promise not to make such a fool of myself again.

*Sitting on the arm of the sofa, drawing* Becky *toward him and putting both his arms about her.*

*Becky.* Tom's idea now is that you deserve all you get. He'll say you deserve Mrs. Crespigny.

*Leaving him, she goes above the table.*

*Rol.* Oh, come, she's not so bad as that!

*Becky.* How old is she?

*Rol.* She has told me several ages. The general average would make her about forty-seven and a quarter.

*Becky.* Pretty?

*Rol.* A fine figure of a woman and plays an A-one game of piquet.

*Becky.* I see! When did her husband die?

*Rol.* He didn't die. He stole from the bank in which he was employed and went to jail, and she says for social reasons she was naturally obliged to take advantage of the divorce law. I have a suspicion myself he may have preferred jail!

*Becky* [*Comes quickly to him*]. Father, I would never forgive you if you did such a thing! It's degrading to me and to my mother's memory for you to accept any sort of indulgence at that woman's hands! When we get her paid, you must leave her house.

*Rol.* That I can't and won't do, because I'm far too comfortable!

*Serv.* [*entering Left, announces*]. Mrs. Crespigny!

*Rol.* [*jumps up*]. Mrs. who?

Mrs. Crespigny *comes in flamboyantly. She is a woman past the age of uncertainty, dressed gaudily, with an hourglass figure; she has innumerable bracelets and bangles, and an imitation jewelled chain flaunts a heavy pair of lorgnettes, like a gargoyle hanging over a much-curved bust. Enormous wax pearls in her ears are in direct contrast*

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[1] Duplicates: double postcards.

*to the dark beginnings of her otherwise russet-gold hair. Neither her shoes nor her stays fit, and both are too tight. She is brightly rouged, and yet the very failure of the façade reveals, somehow, the honest interior of a human if forlornly foolish female.*

*Mrs. Crespigny.* Excuse me for intruding myself which I know is not social good form. Mis' Warder, I take it?

BECKY *bows.*

*Rol.* [*angrily*]. What do you mean by following me here?

*Mrs. Cres.* [*After severe look at him, turns back to* BECKY]. I want you to know the facts as between your father and me, and just how the matter is, and get your support that I done right! [*To* ROLAND.] I know your daughter is a lady if you ain't, and being a lady myself I have a certain pride. [*To* BECKY.] I've had a good deal of trouble persuading your father that though a lady sometimes takes in a paying guest she still holds her own in the social scale. I have friends of my own in the New York Smart Set! My niece married a Mr. Gubenhamers and lives in a perfectly elegant house of her own on Lennox Avenue. Do you know her? One thousand two hundred and fifty-three?

*Becky.* No.

*Mrs. Cres.* Oh, don't you? Well, of course I know New York is big. Still, perhaps you know her husband's cousin, who is also in a way a relation? You will know her by name—Mrs. Otto Gurtz, President of the West Side Ladies Saturday Afternoon Social Gathering?

*Becky.* No, I'm afraid I don't know her.

*Mrs. Cres.* Well! I guess you don't read the Harlem society notes in the papers; if you did, you'd know what she stands for socially.

*Becky.* Suppose we keep to the reason of your visit—I understand my father owes you money—[MRS. CRESPIGNY *turns sharply to* ROLAND.] and that you insist on being paid, which is natural—

*Mrs. Cres.* A trumped-up story! [*Going to* ROLAND.] I guess I done just about the right thing to chase on here after you! I'm sorry to say it, Mis' Warder, 'specially as it ain't exactly ladylike, but your father, with all his superfine qualities, is a liar! Yes, ma'am, between us two as ladies, he's an ornery liar!

*Sinks into a chair in tears.* ROLAND *lights a cigarette angrily and goes up to the window.*

*Becky.* Mrs. Crespigny, wouldn't it be better to behave more like a lady and talk less about one? Why break into the house of a woman you don't know and make a scene over a matter of rent due you—

*Mrs. Cres.* It ain't the rent! It's all a question of horses. When he left my house this morning, he said he was leaving for good unless I let him have—

*Rol.* [*interrupting her*]. Mrs. Crespigny! You're hysterical! You're saying things you'll regret—

*Serv.* [*entering, Left*]. The messenger has come back, madam.

*Becky.* Oh, I want to see that boy! Excuse me a minute.

[*She hurries out and the* SERVANT *follows her*

*Rol.* I knew you were in the train; that's why I staid in the smoker. And it decided me to keep my word never to go back to your house!

*He sits determinedly in the armchair at Left.*

*Mrs. Cres.* And you told her I was dunning you for the rent!

*Rol.* She has no more sympathy with my betting than you have! I wouldn't tell her the money was to put on Wet Blanket, Monday!

*Mrs. Cres.* [*Rises and goes to him*]. No, you'd rather let her think I was a grasping harpy, when you know, if the truth's told, you owe me at least five times five hundred dollars with your borrowings and your losses at cards!

*Rol.* [*smilingly*]. You haven't won lately.

*Mrs. Cres.* Do you know why?

*Rol.* Oh, of course! You got out of the wrong side of the bed or you dreamed of a black horse!

*Mrs. Cres.* [*pathetically and a little ashamed*]. No. I've let you win a-purpose—because I was ashamed for you to owe me any more money. I'm trying to keep a little pride in you somehow, even if I have to cheat to do it.

*She almost breaks down again, and turning away, takes a powder puff from a little gilt box and powders her nose to cover up the traces of tears.*

*Rol.* Well, do you think it's pleasant for me to owe you money? A kind friend like you! [*Going to the mantel and flicking his cigarette ash in the fireplace.*] One reason I want to take advantage of this tip for Monday is to pay you if I win.

*Mrs. Cres.* Yes, and then go board somewhere else? Is that your idea? Or to stay here?

*Rol.* Well, my daughter and her husband want me. [*Leaning on the mantel.*] They say their home is my home.

*Mrs. Cres.* [*going toward him, alarmed*]. But you won't stay, will you? I left word with Josephine to have your favorite meenoo cooked for a late supper in case you'd come back. We'll have a game to-night. I'll play you a rubber for the five hundred—it's against my conscience to give it to you outright for horse-racing.

*Rol.* *Loan* it to me!

*Mrs. Cres.* Yes, of course! I always mean loan. Oh, the flat'd be just too dreadful lonesome without you! Say you'll come back! Quick, before Mis' Warder comes in! Won't you?

*Rol.* [*coming toward her*]. Well, if you make it a personal favor to you in this way, I can't exactly refuse! And that ends the most serious quarrel we've had yet.

*Mrs. Cres.* [*embarrassedly*]. If we was man and wife, there wouldn't be any need of such quarrels. The money'd be yours then to do as you liked with.

*Rol.* Don't tempt me! You know you're a great deal too kind to me as it is and I'm no good to take as much advantage of you as I do.

*Mrs. Cres.* Oh, pshaw! Say! I wish you'd help me to get on the right side of your daughter. You're too delicate to say anything, but I always suspect it's her that stands between us.

*Becky* [*coming back*]. I'm very sorry, but you must go at once. I have an important engagement here in a few minutes and must change my dress. I will promise you, Mrs. Crespigny—

*Rol.* [*Interrupts*]. I have made an arrangement with Mrs. Crespigny that is agreeable to her, without Tom's and your assistance—

*Becky* [*alarmed*]. Father, not—

*Rol.* [*Shakes his head*]. It seems I exaggerated my indebtedness a little and Mrs. Crespigny exaggerated her desire to be paid this month and—

*Mrs. Cres.* Yes, I was just mad clean through and would have said anything!

*Becky.* Well, I'm glad it's settled, but it seems a pity you couldn't have accomplished it without the railway journey, especially as I must ask you to excuse me at once.

*She guides* Mrs. Crespigny *toward the door Left, but* Mrs. Crespigny, *instead of going out, makes a circle around an armchair and settles herself in it.* Becky *goes despairingly to* Roland.

*Mrs. Cres.* Oh, I don't regret the trip over, because I've been dying to meet you, Mis' Warder, ever since I had the pleasure of knowing your father in a *taty taty* sort of way. And we can catch the four-fifteen.

*Becky.* Good! [*Crossing to her, and holding out her hand.*] I'm sorry I can't ask you to stay.

*Mrs. Cres.* Oh, I can come over nearly any day! I've got such a perfectly lovely servant girl now. I give her every night out and she works like a dog all day—and you can trust her with everything! Can't you, Mr. Roland?

*Rol.* You can trust her with me all right.

Mrs. Crespigny *laughs loudly.*

*Becky.* Father!

*Mrs. Cres.* Ain't he killing! Do you inherit his sense of humor? He can get anything he wants out of me with just one of them wittycisms. [Roland *winks aside to* Becky.] Of course, I won't say that he ain't an expensive boarder—[Becky *sinks in the chair near Centre, discouraged.*]—but I consider he cuts both ways and at the finish the ends meets.

*Becky.* I think I gather what you mean. I'm afraid you'll lose your train!

*Mrs. Cres.* I mean it's hard for a lady what's got it in her blood, to take boarders, because usually the boarders is beneath what the lady's been accustomed to and she don't feel at home with 'em. Now with your father it's different, because he's a Roland and I'm a Crespigny.

*Becky.* Oh, is that your own name? I thought—

*Rol.* [*interrupting*]. No, Mrs. Crespigny's maiden name was Ruggles.

*Mrs. Cres.* Yes, mamma made what we'd call a *messyliance*, married beneath her, you know. But she never descended, nor allowed us to neither, to papa's social level. Mamma was a O'Roorke. You know, one of them early high-toned families that came over from Amsterdam in the *Mayflower*.

*Becky.* I see!

*Mrs. Cres.* Mamma often said to me, says she, "Jennie"—

*Becky* [*with her patience exhausted, jumps up, interrupting her*]. I must say good-by now—I've no time to dress.

[*She hurries out Right*

*Mrs. Cres.* [*rising*]. Well, do you think I made any sort of a hit with her?

*Rol.* My dear friend, I've told you before, you're not quite my daughter's style.

*Mrs. Cres.* But why not? She seems real refined.

Roland *groans.* Warder *comes in Left. He does not see* Mrs. Crespigny *on his entrance*

*Ward.* Hello, father! I didn't think I was going to have this pleasure. I had an engagement to play racquets with Billy Weld, but he broke down in his motor somewhere between Tuxedo and here and I couldn't wait.

Mrs. Crespigny *comes a few steps and beckons to* Roland *to introduce* Warder.

*Rol.* Mrs. Crespigny, Mr. Warder.

*Mrs. Cres.* [*Bows*]. Pleased to make your acquaintance.

*She turns away with a rather grand manner.* Warder *looks from her to* Roland *and shakes his head, then goes to the writing-table with some letters he has brought in from the hall.*

*Rol.* Excuse me one moment. [*Beckons to* Mrs. Crespigny *and whispers to her aside.*] Wait for me!

*Mrs. Cres.* In the hall?

*Rol.* Lord, no! At the station!

*Mrs. Cres.* Oh! [*Going, she turns at door to bid* Warder *good-by.*] If you should ever be coming over to Baltimore, Mr. Warder, why just drop in!

[*She goes out Left*

*Ward.* Where's Becky?

*Rol.* [*going to him*]. She's upstairs. I just wanted to thank you for the money you sent me day before yesterday.

*Ward.* What money?

*Rol.* The check for fifty dollars Becky mailed me.

*Ward.* [*Starts, but controls it immediately*]. Oh, a check for fifty dollars—

*Rol.* The joke on me is that what I wanted was five hundred!

*Digs* Tom *in ribs.*

*Ward.* [*looking off where* Becky *went, absorbed in his thoughts*]. Oh, five hundred!

*Rol.* Yes, just five hundred. [*He looks at* Warder, *and waits; hums a song and dances a few steps.*] Nothing doing, I suppose?

*Ward.* No. Father, the fact is—

*Rol.* Yes, I know, Becky told me. Excuse me, I've got to catch a train. Good-by, my boy.

*Ward.* [*with his thoughts elsewhere*]. Good-by!

[Roland *goes out whistling* "Waiting at the Church." Warder *stands a moment thinking, then takes out his key chain*

*Serv.* [*entering, shows in* Lindon]. Mr. Lindon to see Mrs. Warder, sir.

Warder *looks up with a start, which he immediately controls, and disguises completely his thoughts and emotions.*

*Lin.* How are you, Warder?

*Ward.* [*Speaks very casually and pleasantly, with complete self-control*]. Good afternoon, Lindon. [*Sees* Servant *about to go to* Becky, *stops him.*] Jenks! [Jenks *goes to him.* Warder *gives him a key from his chain.*] Go to my room and get me a large blue envelope from the upper right-hand drawer of the desk.

*Jenks.* Yes, sir. [*He goes out Left*

*Ward.* Excuse me, Mrs. Warder is out. She'll be sorry.

*Lin.* [*surprised*]. Out?

*Ward.* Yes.

*Lin.* But surely there must be some mistake?

*Ward.* No, I'm sorry. I assure you she's out.

*Lin.* Oh! Then do you mind if I wait?

*Ward.* Is that scarcely worth while? I must be off at once, and I imagine Mrs. Warder is out for her usual bridge afternoon.

*Lin.* I think, on the contrary, she must be surely coming back, and if you don't mind, I'll wait.

*Ward.* [*with an apparently good-natured laugh*]. I don't like to insist against your apparently superior knowledge—

*Lin.* [*also smiling*]. No, no, it's only a note I received a few moments ago at the club. Here it is. [*Takes it from his pocket.*] That she must see me this afternoon. You know your wife is kindly acting as intermediary between Eve and myself. It is in regard to that. [*He hands the note to* Warder, *who glances at it and returns it without reading.*] As it only came half an hour ago, I feel sure Mrs. Warder must expect to return soon.

*Serv.* [*entering with an envelope, which he gives to* Warder]. That is all I can find, sir.

*Ward.* [*humorously*]. That's all I want, so it's all right. Jenks, am I wrong in understanding that Mrs. Warder is out?

*Serv.* Yes, sir. Mrs. Warder is in, sir.

*Ward.* Oh! I beg your pardon, Lindon.

*Lin.* That's all right.

*Ward.* [*to* Jenks]. Jenks, say to Mrs. Warder, Mr. Lindon is here. You needn't say anything about me. I'm off.

*Serv.* Yes, sir. [*Goes out Right*

*Lin.* I'm not driving you away, I hope.

*Ward.* Oh, no, I have some important papers to go over. Make yourself comfortable. Good-by.

*Lin.* Thanks, old man. Good-by.

[*He sits on the sofa, as* Warder *goes out Left*

*Lin.* Well! She did send for you, Freddy, old son! Now's your chance!

*Serv.* [*reëntering*]. Mrs. Warder will be down at once.

*Lin.* Thank you.

[*The* Servant *goes out Left*

*Lin.* [*Goes to the piano and sings a verse of a song,* "Everything comes to him who waits," *etc. An idea comes to him. He weighs it, accepts it, smiles, and stops playing.*] I will! By George, I will! *He rises.*

Becky *hurries in from the Right and goes quickly toward him, crying* "Fred!" *in a tone of distress and excitement. She leaves the door open behind her.* Lindon, *before she realizes what he is doing, has met her, taken her in his arms, and kissed her. She forces herself away from him, standing for a moment speechless with rage and astonishment.*

*Lin.* I told you, didn't I, Becky? *Tries to embrace her again.*

*Becky* [*slowly and deliberately*]. That's just exactly what Tom said you'd do!

*Lin.* *What!*

*Becky.* Ten to one, he said, if I sent for you again, you'd kiss me.

*Lin.* [*in alarm and astonishment*]. Yes, but what—

*Becky.* But I wouldn't believe him! I said, and I believed, he did you an injustice.

*Lin.* So you talked me all over with him, did you! Then why did you send for me to-day?

*Becky.* Because I was a fool, if you want the true reason!

*Lin.* My dear Becky—

*Becky.* Oh, you'll hear more and worse than that if you stay to listen! I advise you to go! You can't help me. I don't trust you. You might even make matters worse. It may have been all done purposely as it is.

*Lin.* Oh!

*Becky.* You see I'm ready to believe all I've heard of you, now that you've shown your true silly self to me in that one sickening moment, and I'd rather not be saved at all than be saved by you!

*She leans for a second against the corner of the writing-table.*

*Lin.* How saved? From what?

*Becky.* Never mind! I only want to say one more thing to you and then go, please. But I want this to ring in your ears so long as you remember me! There is only one man in this world I love, and that's Tom, and there's only one man I despise and that's you! Lindon, Fred Lindon! You know who I mean! I know now what our friendship meant to you and I wish I could cut out of my life every second of every hour I've spent with you! I've been a fool woman, and you've been a cad,—but thank God, there are men in the world—real men—and one is my husband. Now go, please! Eve's a fool not to jump at the chance of getting rid of you and I shall tell her so.

*She turns away from him with a movement of dismissal.*

*Lin.* [*going toward her*]. Do! For that, at least, I shall thank you, as well as for our delightful friendship, which I am sorry to have end so contrary to my expectations.

*Becky* [*With her eyes down, speaks in a low, shamed voice*]. This room is too small for you and me at this moment,—which leaves?

*He smiles, hesitates a moment, then sits in the armchair at Left.* Becky *gives a half-smothered exclamation of rage and starts to leave the room.* Lindon *rises quickly.*

*Lin.* No, no, I was only joking! I'm sorry you take the whole affair so seriously. Allow me.

[*He bows and goes out Left*

*Becky* [*Stands quietly thinking a moment, then makes up her mind*]. Eve herself is the one to help me! But I can't go to her till I'm sure she'll listen and understand—Laura! [*She sits by the table and takes up the receiver of the telephone.*] Seven eight Plaza. Yes! It's a lady this time, so I hope you won't have to listen! Hello! Is Miss—Oh, is that you, Laura? Can you come over at once? I am in dreadful trouble! Oh, well, after dinner, then! No, I was going out, but I won't—it's too important. You were right—and Eve's right too. Never mind, I can't tell you over the 'phone. I'll explain everything to-night, only don't fail me. You can prevent a real catastrophe that has no need to happen.—Oh, that's all right, don't stop another minute, then. Thank you with all my heart. [*She hangs up the receiver, gives a long sigh, and sits worriedly thinking.* Warder *comes in, serious but calm. Looking at him, half frightened, she makes a great effort to be natural, and to be in a good humor.*] Hello, Tom! Your game finished already?

*Ward.* We didn't play. Weld didn't get back to town. Any callers?

*Becky.* No.

*Ward.* I thought I saw some one leaving—from the top of the street.

*Becky.* Did you? Oh! it was probably father; he came.

*Ward.* No, I spoke with your father some fifteen minutes ago. He told me about the money you gave him.

*A second's pause;* Becky *looks down and then up at him.*

*Becky.* Are you angry?

*Ward.* You gave me your word you wouldn't.

*Becky.* But I was so sorry for him—that's why he came to-day, he said he must have it; I couldn't refuse him and you weren't here!

*Ward.* He said you mailed him my check day before yesterday.

Becky *is silent, trapped, frightened. A pause, then she speaks in a low voice.*

*Becky.* I'm so sorry—

*A second's pause.*

*Ward.* It looked to me like Fred Lindon.

Becky, *more frightened, realizing what is hanging over her, like a drowning person who cannot swim, flounders helplessly about in the next few speeches, trying to save herself by any and every means that she thinks may help her for the moment.*

*Becky.* Well, I'll be honest, it *was* Fred Lindon!

*Ward.* [*anger getting the best of him*]. After everything—your word of honor, Eve's accusations, my absolute desire—you sent for him to come and see you!

*Becky.* No, no, you mustn't think that, Tom! He came of his own accord of course,—I suppose to see if I would see him! I didn't know it!

*Ward.* [*wary, suspicious, to lead her on*]. Then why did you see him? You could easily excuse yourself.

*Becky.* No, you don't understand. [*She flounders hopelessly.*] I didn't know it was he! Don't you see?

*Ward.* No, I don't see!

*Watches her with a face growing harder and harder with each lie she tells.*

*Becky.* But I'm telling you—it was just like this; I was upstairs and Jenks came—and said a gentleman wanted to see me in the drawing-room. Just that, don't you see—a gentleman. [*She sees the doubting look in his face and mistaking it, tries to make her story more plausible.*] I was surprised too, and said "Who?" and Jenks said the gentleman gave no name—[*He turns sharply away from her, unable to face her as she tells the lies.*] Yes, I know it was funny—I thought so then. I suppose Jenks considered it a joke,—and I suppose he didn't give his name for that very reason, for fear I wouldn't see him—[Warder, *looking up as if to stop her, sees the door Right open and quickly closes it.*] Of course the moment I came into the room and saw who it was, I excused myself, and he left.

*Ward.* [*in a voice not loud but full of anger and emotion*]. Lies! all of it! Every word a lie, and another and another and another!

*Becky* [*breathless with fright, gasping*]. Tom!

*Ward.* [*going to her*]. You sent for him! [*She is too frightened to speak, but she shakes her head in a last desperate effort at denial.*] Don't shake your head! I know what I'm talking about and for the first time with you, I believe! [*She puts up her hands helplessly and backs away from him.*] I saw your note to him! [*She starts with a sense of anger added to her other emotions.*] I read it here, in this room; he gave it to me before you came down.

*Becky.* The beast!

*Ward.* [*with biting satire*]. *You're* going to misjudge him too!

*Becky.* No, Tom, I'll tell you the truth and all of it!

*Ward.* Naturally, now you've *got to!*

*Becky.* No—wait! I did send for him—it was to tell him about those papers of Eve's.

*Ward.* Yes, you must plan your escape together!

*Becky.* No! because I still believed he was decent. I thought it was his duty, that he would claim it as his right, to prevent such a scandal as Eve threatened to make, which he knew I didn't deserve.

*Ward.* Hah!

*Becky.* You may sneer, but I don't! Yes, I broke my promise to you—what else could I do? You wouldn't let me send for him! And he came! And he did what you said he would. He took me in his arms before I could stop him, and kissed me.

*She bends over the back of the chair at Centre on which she is leaning, and sobs.*

*Ward.* [*Goes to her, speaking with bitter irony*]. Charming! And you turned on him, of course! Played the shocked and surprised wife and ordered him out of the house!

*Becky.* Yes. But I did! Why do you speak as if I didn't?

*Ward.* Do you expect me to believe this, too?

*Becky* [*facing him*]. I don't expect, you've got to!

*Ward.* Do you think you can go on telling lies forever and I'll go on blindly believing them as I have for three years?

*Becky.* Even you couldn't have turned on him with more anger and disgust than I did!

*Ward.* I couldn't believe you if I wanted to! You've destroyed every breath of confidence in me!

*Becky.* It's the truth I'm telling you now!

*Ward.* In everything—everything that has come up since my eyes were first forced half open—you have told me a lie!

*Becky.* It's the truth! It's the truth!

*Ward.* [*Continues, hardly hearing her*]. The money to your father, the first lie, and to-day made a double one! All this rotten evidence of Eve's—another dozen! Your promise that Lindon's visit Thursday should be his last, the next!

*Becky.* I meant it then—I meant it truthfully.

*Ward.* [*ignoring her interruption*]. His visit after all to-day—that led of course to a mass of lies! And then the truth! He kissed you! And then another lie and another dozen to try and save yourself!

*Becky* [*quietly, in a hushed, frightened voice*]. By everything in this world and in the next that I hold dear and reverence, I've told you the truth at last.

*Ward.* You don't know what's true when you hear it or when you speak it! I could never believe in you again! Never have confidence! How could I? Ask any man in the world, and his answer would be the same!

*He turns and goes away from her, to control his anger, which threatens to get the best of him.*

*Becky* [*sobbing*]. No, no, Tom! Don't! don't say that! You must believe in me! You must believe in me!

*Ward.* [*After a pause, collects himself and comes to the writing-table*]. Becky, you and I must say good-by to each other. We must finish separately. [*A silence. She looks at him in dumb horror and surprise.*] Do you understand?

*Becky* [*in a low voice*]. No!

*Ward.* We must separate. Quietly—no fuss, no divorce unless you wish it. [*A pause, she does not answer. He goes toward her and repeats.*] No divorce unless you wish it.

*Becky* [*with simple but deep pathos*]. I love you.

*Ward.* You must stay on in the house for the present, till you can make your plans. That will help keep the thing quiet, too.

*Becky.* Tom! Do you really mean all you're saying? Do you realize what it must mean for me—for both of us?

*Ward.* Yes.

*Becky.* To-morrow, perhaps—?

*Ward.* No. I shall go to Boston to-night for a few days; when I come back, you may have settled on something. If you haven't, I can manage all right. I don't want to press you about that, only—

*Becky.* I will not stay in your house one single day without you.

*Ward.* You'll have to! My price for hushing up Lindon and Eve, and every one else, is that you on your side act with dignity, and as I think wisest.

*Becky* [*going to the armchair at Left*]. No! A woman like me whose heart is breaking, whether she's right or wrong, can't act like that. *She can't do it!*

*She sinks into the chair, bursting into tears.*

*Ward.* [*beside her*]. Try. For your sake as well as mine. Good-by, Becky.

*Becky* [*with the tears choking her voice*]. I told you the truth the last time. Oh, can't you believe me?

*Ward.* No—good-by.

[*Going*

*Becky.* I love you and only you and you always—

*Ward.* [*Turns in the doorway*]. The club address will reach me!

[*He goes out, closing the door behind him.* BECKY *sits still a moment thinking; then she goes to the writing-table, rings the bell, and takes up a time-table. Her hands drop upon the table in utter dejection and her head lowers as the tears come again fast and thick*

*Serv.* [*entering Left*]. Yes, madam?

*Becky* [*controlling her emotion and hiding as best she can the traces of it*]. Tell Perkins to pack my small trunk and hand-bag. I am going to Baltimore to spend a day or so with my father.

*Serv.* Yes, madam.

*Becky.* And then come back, please.

*Serv.* Very good, madam.

[*Goes out*

*Becky* [*Takes up the telephone*]. Hello! 708 Plaza. [*As she listens for the answer* *she looks about the room, the control goes from her face, and the tears come once more; she brushes them away and tries to speak in a conventional tone without displaying her emotion, which is however plainly evident.*] Hello, I want Miss Fraser, please . . . . Oh, ask her to call me the minute she's free, please. Mrs. Warder. [*She hangs up the receiver and writes.*] "I am leaving now. You will at least believe that I cannot turn you out of your house, nor can I live in it one single day without you. It is ready waiting for you as I shall be all the rest of my life if you can ever again believe—"

*She stops as the* SERVANT *enters and comes to her.*

*Serv.* Madam?

BECKY *finishes writing silently.*

*Becky* [*sealing the note*]. Has Mr. Warder gone yet?

*Serv.* Only just this second went out, madam. He told me to pack his bag and meet him at the station with it.

*Becky* [*rising*]. Give this to Mr. Warder with his things.

*Gives the note.*

*Serv.* Yes, madam.

[*He goes out Left. The telephone bell rings*

*Becky* [*going to the table, sits, and takes up the receiver. Again she does her best to keep the emotion out of her voice, but only partly succeeds*]. Hello! Laura? I'm so sorry, after all, I can't see you tonight. Tom has been called to—Chicago suddenly on business—yes, isn't it too bad? And I've had a telegram that father isn't very well, so I am taking the five-twenty train to Baltimore. Yes, I'll write. No, I don't think he's seriously ill. Good-by!

*She hangs up the receiver, dropping her head on the table and sobbing heart-brokenly as*

THE CURTAIN FALLS.

## ACT III

MR. ROLAND'S *rooms in* MRS. CRESPIGNY'S *flat in Baltimore. This is the parlor of a cheap flat, with the bedroom, through an arch, originally intended for the dining room and lit by a narrow window on a well. There is red paper on the walls and red globes for the electric lights. An ugly set of furniture, with many tidies, a strange conglomeration of cheap feminine "nick-nacks," relieved by a sporting print or two, a frame of prize ribbons, and a few other masculine belongings which have been added to the original condition of the room, like a thin coat of paint. At back is a bow-window beside a sofa. On the Left is the opening into the bedroom, and beside this a door leads to the hall. There is a centre-table with chairs on either side and a Morris chair down on the Right. A sideboard in the upper Left corner.*

ROLAND *and* MRS. CRESPIGNY *are playing piquet at the centre-table. A "Teddy Bear" with a pink ribbon bow about its neck is sitting on the table near* MRS. CRESPIGNY. *They play on through part of the scene.* ROLAND *stops to light a cigarette, and* MRS. CRESPIGNY *takes advantage of the pause to powder her face and preen herself in a pocket mirror.*

*Mrs. Cres.* You don't think you smoke too many of them?

*Rol.* If my smoking is disagreeable to you, I might spend my evenings at the club.

*Mrs. Cres.* You know different! You can't make that an excuse for skinning out of spending your evenings at home. I only wish't I smoked 'em myself. I've read in the papers that real ladies do now—but I guess it's the fast set, and I always was conservative.

*Rol.* [*playing*]. Don't talk; study your cards. If you don't take care, you'll win!

*Mrs. Cres.* Will I? Excuse me, I wasn't thinking. [*She plays a card, and as* ROLAND *takes the trick she takes up her mirror and examines wrinkles.*] I believe I'll have massage. I heard of a fine massoor yesterday.

*Rol.* Masseuse, you mean, I hope.

*Mrs. Cres.* Massoor! Massoose is plural. The singular is massoor. You forget I was educated in New Orleans.

*She rises and goes to the sideboard and pours out a brandy and soda.*

*Rol.* Where's my brandy and soda?

*Mrs. Cres.* I'm getting it.

*Bringing the glass down to the table.*

*Rol.* That's a good girl. Thank you, Mrs. Crespigny.

*Mrs. Cres.* Ain't it funny, good friends as we've been for so long now, we've kep' on calling each other "Mr." and "Mrs."? S'pose it wouldn't be etiquay to call each other by our first names.

*Rol.* Etiquette.

*Mrs. Cres.* *Etiquay!* You can correct my English when you want to, but my French I've kep' pure since school, and I remember perfeckly—all words ending in e-t you pernounce A.

*Rol.* What is your first name?

*Mrs. Cres.* Genevieve, but I was always called Jenny by my first h—! I mean—I was always called Jenny by my schoolgirl friends.

*Rol.* [*playing*]. Very interesting.

*Mrs. Cres.* [*playing*]. I think your first name's real pretty!

*Rol.* [*taking the trick*]. Tut, tut! You're getting too skittish, Mrs. Crespigny.

*She laughs a little embarrassedly.*

*Mrs. Cres.* It's your fault!

*Rol.* [*playing card, and laughing*]. Then I apologize!

*Mrs. Cres.* [*playing card, and giggling*]. Oh, you needn't!

*Rol.* [*laughing more at her than with her, but realizing that she will not know the difference*]. I insist.

*He takes the trick.*

*Mrs. Cres.* Anybody'd think we was engaged to be married or something of that sort, wouldn't they?

*Rol.* I hope not!

*Mrs. Cres.* Oh, I don't know! I remember some postal cards what I've read that might be construed to lean that way. [Roland *rises and gets a cigarette from the box on the table in the bow-window.*] There was one from Atlantic City that was just too sweet for anything! You sent it after we had that ridickerlous quarrel on the board walk.

*Rol.* What about?

*Mrs. Cres.* I lost my self-respect and asked you to kiss me, 'cause you said you was grateful for the fifty dollars I gave you for your poker losses the night before. And you handed me back my money and said if that was the price of the loan—[*with a touch of futile emotion.*] oh, how you hurt my feelings!

*Rol.* [*coming back to his chair*]. That was only a bluff! Come along, I'll play you a game for the whole bunch of postal cards.

*Takes up the second deck and shuffles.*

*Mrs. Cres.* [*rising, speaks rather grandly*]. Nobody won't never get them postal cards from me except over my dead body. [*Cuts the cards, and* Roland *deals.*] And I intend to refer to 'em every chance I get in hopes that some day—just in a desperate fit, maybe—you'll up and marry me to stop me.

*Sits again.*

*Rol.* Go on, play.

*Mrs. Cres.* You've owned up you're comfortable in my cute little flat—and I don't nag.

*Both take up their hands, both play, and she takes trick.*

*Rol.* You haven't the right, but as my wife—nay, nay, Pauline.

*Mrs. Cres.* You've got the best rooms here, and if you ever do pay any board, don't I lend it right back to you the next day?

*Rol.* Isn't it a little indelicate to remind me of that, Mrs. Crespigny? [*Playing*].

*Mrs. Cres.* [*getting a little angry*]. Well, I guess the indelicacy's even! [*She plays and starts to take the trick. He stops her and takes it himself.*] Oh, excuse me, I'm at your beck and nod, and I've even so far forgot my family pride as to hint that you wasn't unacceptable to me in a nearer relation.

*Rol.* There you go again! Keep off the thin ice!

*Mrs. Cres.* [*Throws down her cards and loses her temper outright*]. Well, why won't you marry me? I may have forgot my pride, but I never forget myself. You know you wouldn't dare step over the invisible line between the dumb-waiter and the bath-room, what separates your apartment from mine in the flat.

*Rol.* One moment, please. Have I ever even hinted at taking the slightest advantage of your unprotected position in this house? [*He rises in mock dignity.*] Who's kept further from that invisible line, you or I?

*Mrs. Cres.* Well, I must say you've always behaved toward me like a perfect gentleman. [*He sits again and takes another cigarette.*] But jes' let's speak the truth—if you can about anything! [*He fumbles in his vest pockets.*] Matches? [*She rises, goes to the sideboard, and finding a box of matches, brings it back to the table. During the first part of the following speech she makes nervous and ineffectual efforts to strike matches, in each case breaking off the heads without any result.*] You know you ain't wanted at your clubs; that's why you first took to playin' evenings with me—that, and 'cause I was easy! You know that here in Baltimore you're called a tout,[1] a broken-down gambler, and a has-been, but I've always hoped you was a will-be for me. [*Irritated by her repeated failures, he takes the matchbox from her and lights his cigarette with the first match he strikes.*] You know your old friends'd rather go 'round the block than stop and talk to you in the street. Yes, you know it as well as I do! And you've lived off me, borrowed money of me, led me to caring for you, let me take care of you as if you was—my own child, and I've saved you from bein' a drunken sot! [*Her voice fills with tears, but her anger gets the best of her, and she finishes strongly, striking the table with her beringed hand as she leans across toward him.*] Now, why ain't I good enough for you?

*Rol.* [*rising, really angry, and his dignity offended*]. Mrs. Crespigny—

*Mrs. Cres.* Oh, you needn't get on your high horse or I'll win this rubber for the five hundred! I know you're worthless, and I know you don't always tell the truth, but through it all you've been a real gentleman to me, and I realized yesterday, when I thought you was gone for good, what it meant to me. I'm a decent woman, Mr. Roland, if I am a fool, and I swear I'm good enough for you!

*Rol.* So far as that goes, you're too good for me, but I've got others to consider. My daughter—

*Mrs. Cres.* [*interrupting him*]. Yes, I know she's against me. [*She sits again, and with determination.*] Well, I'm against her, and perhaps some day I'll have a chance to pay her back!

*Rol.* That's talking foolishly! In the first place, my allowance would stop the day I married.

*Mrs. Cres.* Well, haven't I got enough for two? It's looked mighty like it the last couple a years.

*She nervously takes the "Teddy Bear" from the table to hide her embarrassment at her boldness, and laying it flat on her knee, face downward, reties the pink bow on its neck.*

*Rol.* [*sitting, he gathers the cards together and shuffles them*]. Come, come, here we are again on one of those useless discussions. Come along, give me another brandy and soda.

*Mrs. Cres.* [*resignedly*]. All right. [*Rises, and takes his glass, replacing the "Teddy Bear" on the table.*] This will be your second before twelve o'clock and it's got to be a little weakish. [*She goes to the sideboard. The front door-bell is heard to ring.*] My goodness! who can that be?

*The bell rings again.*

*Rol.* Don't know, old girl, but go on, I'll deal for you. [*He deals.*]

*Mrs. Cres.* [*going to the table, cuts the cards*]. I just love to have you call me "old girl"—it seems so nice and familiar.

*The bell rings again, and* Mrs. Crespigny, *taking the "Teddy Bear" with her, places it on the side table at Left and goes out.* Roland *deals. After a moment's pause* Becky *comes in, carrying a hand-bag. She enters with an air of bravado, which fades instantly when she observes that* Roland *does not see her. But her pathetic, timid look vanishes immediately when he looks up.*

*Rol.* [*going on dealing, without looking up*]. Who was it?

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[1] tout: one who gives a tip on a horse race for an expected share in the winnings.

*Becky* [*with forced gayety*]. Hello, father!

*Rol.* Good Heavens!

*Becky* [*putting her bag on the table at Left*]. Aren't you surprised?

*Rol.* [*dryly*]. Very.

*Becky.* And pleased?

*Rol.* Where in the world did you come from?

*Becky.* New York; the next train after you. Give me a kiss. How are you? [*Kisses him.*]

*Rol.* What have you come for? Where are you stopping?

*Becky.* Here!

*Rol.* At what hotel?

*Becky.* No hotel—here with you!

*Rol.* Nonsense! There's no place for you in the flat.

*Becky.* Why not? I gave my check to the expressman and my trunk will be around in the morning.

*Rol.* These two rooms are all I have. [*Showing the opening to the Left.*] Take a look at the bedroom—a beastly, dark little hole with one window that doesn't look out,—it looks in! The bedroom of the flat we use for a dining room. Mrs. Crespigny sleeps in the servant's room—so she tells me.

*Becky.* Father!

*Rol.* Now you can see what nice sort of surroundings your poor old father's had to put up with these last years.

*Becky* [*Takes off her hat and cloak and puts them on sofa at Right*]. You have only yourself to blame! You could live splendidly on the allowance Tom makes you in the one club you've got left.

*Rol.* You needn't take off your things, you can't stay here.

*Becky.* Oh, can't I? I've come to pay you a little visit and here I stay to-night and several nights.

*Comes to the centre-table and starts to collect cards.*

*Rol.* Be careful! That's Genevieve's hand and we must finish this sometime—I'm well ahead. [*Carefully places the cards, properly divided, on the table at Left.*] And really, Becky, you can't stay here. You can go to a hotel if you want to, or back to New York. You're in the way here! I'm an old man; this sort of thing upsets me! There's no room and there's no bed for you. [*Crosses to the Morris chair and sits.*] What the devil do you mean, turning up here well toward midnight, and threatening to stay, when for years I've been trying to get you to come to Baltimore, and you know you were ashamed to come?

*Becky* [*sitting in the chair Left of the centre table*]. That isn't true, father; I always said I'd come if you'd give up certain things.

*Rol.* Well, I haven't given them up, so why have you come? What's the joke? And where's Tom?

*Becky* [*after a second's pause*]. That's just it. Tom has been called to—San Francisco—suddenly—just after you left, on business—and the idea came to me, at last I'll make that visit to father! It'll be a good chance for me to settle Mrs. Crespigny, too!

*Rol.* You couldn't have come at a more inopportune time! I was very busy this evening.

*Becky.* Yes, I know,—piquet with Mrs. C.! I'll finish it with you.

*Rises and goes to get the cards*

*Rol.* No, you won't! You'll go to a hotel for the night and I'll come and have a decent lunch with you to-morrow.

*Becky.* I can't go to a hotel. I've come away without a penny. I had to borrow half the money for my ticket from Perkins.

*Rol.* Where is Perkins?

*Becky.* In New York. I knew, of course, there'd be no place for her here.

*Rol.* Any of the hotel people here will trust you.

*Becky.* I won't ask them. I forgot to get Tom's address, so I can't send to him for any money. I've got to stay with you, father.

*She sits on the arm of the Morris chair and puts her arm about her father.*

*Rol.* You're a very boring person!

*Becky.* That's a kind welcome for a dear and only daughter!

*Rol.* And I'm not going to have myself made uncomfortable by you!

*Becky.* Please let me stay for a day or two, maybe a little longer or maybe not so long. I'll promise not to be any trouble; I'll sleep on the sofa!

*Rol.* Humph! You don't know that sofa! That was made in the antebellum and the antespringum days! Even a cat couldn't sleep on it without chloroform.

*Becky.* Well, I don't expect to sleep, father, and if I don't, you won't know it. I've *got* to stay.

*Rises and goes away and stands by the table with her back toward him.*

*Rol.* [*Looks at her, suddenly suspicious*]. Becky, you're not telling me the truth. Something's the matter.

*Becky* [*turning toward him, taking a high moral stand*]. Really, father!

*Rol.* There's something wrong. What is it?

*Becky.* Nothing.

*Rol.* Oh, come, I'm your father, and I know the look in your eyes when you're not telling the truth; you get that look from me! You're telling me a lie—tell me the truth. What does it mean?

*Becky* [*after a second's pause, bursts out with all her pent-up feelings, which she has been trying to hide*]. I've left Tom.

*Rol.* How do you mean—"Left Tom"?

*Becky.* Left him for good. I'll never live with him again.

*Rol.* Nonsense!

*Becky.* Never! You don't understand.

*She sits again beside the table, leaning her elbows upon it and resting her face between her two hands.*

*Rol.* No, I don't, and I don't want to!

*Becky.* I've left his house in New York for good.

*Rol.* What's your reason? What's he done?

*Becky.* He's deceived me.

*Rol.* [*rising*]. Tom! Never!

*Becky.* Father, I can't go back to him; I can't! Don't ask me any more questions, only keep me with you—please, keep me with you. . . .

*Rol.* [*going to her*]. You're upset about matters. You've had a quarrel, that's all, and you're going back to-night.

*Becky.* No. I've told him I'll never come back and I've come to stay—with you.

*Rol.* But I won't have it! In the first place, Mrs. Crespigny wouldn't have it either. She'd be jealous of your being here—and after all it's her flat. And I don't believe what you tell me about Tom.

*Becky.* We can go somewhere else. Who is Mrs. Crespigny? [*Rises, and going to him takes hold of his sleeve.*] And I'm your daughter. Besides, Tom's allowance will stop. From now on you and I must get on together with the little money I have from mother.

*Rol.* Nothing of the sort. Even if you did leave Tom, you can make him take care of you.

*Becky.* I won't take any money from Tom! No more money! Do you hear me, father?

*Rol.* [*becoming more angry*]. No, I don't hear you! And I have something to say about my end of all this, which is that you've got to go back to your husband before it's too late for him to take you back, and give him a chance to explain! You'll go back to Tom to-night!

*He goes determinedly to the sofa and gets her hat and cloak for her.*

*Becky* [*Takes her hat from him and puts it on the centre-table with equal determination*]. I shall sleep here, in this room, to-night!

*Rol.* You'll sleep in a Pullman car and wake up to-morrow, happy and in your right senses, in Jersey City.

*Becky* [*Moves back from him a little*]. You can't turn me out!

*A pause.* Roland *reads the real trouble in her face and becomes serious and sympathetic.*

*Rol.* Becky, you don't really believe what you say about Tom? [*She lowers her head in assent.*] You *know?* [*She lowers her head again.*] There must be a mistake somewhere! [*Puts the cloak on the Morris chair.*] If I ever knew a man who loved his wife! Go back, Becky!

*Becky.* It's impossible!

*Rol.* [*going to her*]. I speak to you with years of bitter experience behind me, and it's only what good there is left in me which is urging me to say this to you. I know in the end that you'll be nearer happiness than you ever can be any other way. Go back to Tom.

*Becky.* No, no, I tell you, father, I've left Tom for good! Keep me with you—

*A knock on the door.*

*Rol.* Come in!

Mrs. Crespigny *comes in Left and* Becky *sinks down into the Morris chair*

*Mrs. Cres.* [*worried*]. It's getting pretty late! I didn't know as Mis' Warder knew the street car don't run past here after twelve thirty.

*Rol.* That's all right. Mrs. Warder is taking the one o'clock train to New York. We'll catch the last car.

*Mrs. Cres.* [*relieved, smiles*]. Oh, well, then, you've got plenty of time. I'd better let you have my latch-key, though. I'll leave it on the hall table. [*To* Becky.] Would you like anything? A glass of raspberry vinegar and a piece of jell cake?

*Becky.* No, thanks.

*Mrs. Cres.* [*offended*]. Good evening.

*Becky.* Good evening. [Mrs. Crespigny *goes out.*] Why did you say I was going? I'm not!

*Rol.* You are. If you love Tom, you'll go. [*He goes to her and puts his arm around her shoulder.*] Do you love Tom still?

*Becky.* Yes, father.

*Rol.* Then go back, Becky!

*Becky.* No.

*Rol.* Your religion teaches you that the greatest love always carries with it the power of forgiveness.

*Becky* [*eagerly*]. Oh, it's what I want to believe. If it's only true—if it's only true of *us!*

*Rol.* You've got to *make* it true by going back! [*He moves away.*] Good God! you shan't repeat your mother's and my mistake and make a miserable failure of both your lives!

Becky *looks up surprised.*

*Becky.* What mistake?

*Rol.* [*quietly, ashamed*]. Your mother left me, just as you want to leave Tom.

*Becky.* Mother—[*Rises.*] left you?

*Rol.* And for the same reason, do you understand me—that you want to leave Tom.

*Becky.* But you never told me!

*Rol.* No.

*Becky.* How long before she died?

*Rol.* A year.

*Becky.* And how long were you and mother happy together?

*Rol.* A few months—not many.

*Becky.* Tom and I have been blissfully happy for six years!

*Rol.* That's an argument for me! Go back!

*Becky.* What a lot of lies you've always told me about yourself and mother,—all my life! You always said you were an ideal couple and that it was sorrow over her death that made you what you are!

*Rol.* I was ashamed when you found me out—I wanted some excuse to try and keep your sympathy and affection. Besides, what good would it have done to have told you the truth?

*He crosses to the table Left, and taking up a photograph of his wife, stands looking at it.*

*Becky.* If you had always told me the truth about everything, I think it would have saved me this night. I've about decided that the truth in everything is the best for everything in the end—if one could only learn to tell it.

*Rol.* You must begin young and you didn't.

*Becky.* By whose fault? [Roland *turns away from her, feeling the sting.*] Tell me now about you and mother.

*She sits again in the Morris chair.*

*Rol.* [*by the centre-table.*] Well, your mother accused me as you do Tom. But it wasn't true of me, Becky! it wasn't true—then.

*Becky.* I'm afraid I don't believe you, father.

*Rol.* You don't believe me when, even now, after all these years, I tell you it wasn't true?

*Becky.* No. I want to believe you, father, but I can't! You've just admitted you've lied to me all my life about you and mother! Why should I believe you would suddenly turn around and tell me the truth now?

*Rol.* At last, one trait in you like your mother! Do all that I could, swear by everything she or I held holy, I couldn't persuade her I was telling the truth!

*Becky.* Perhaps you had already destroyed her confidence in you! You can do that, even with some one who loves you, in a day, in an hour, in even less!

*Rol.* It did look ugly against me, and your mother was already disappointed in me. I couldn't live up to her standard. [*He smiles.*] I was sort of good-looking, when she married me,—too foppish, perhaps,—and I rode my own horses, generally to win, too,—and what part of my income I didn't make on the race-track I made with the ace and right bower! I promised your mother to give up the gambling side of it—but I couldn't, it was in my blood; I tried, Becky, but I failed. I lied to her about it and she found me out and began to distrust me. She was a crank on the subject of lying, anyway. One of those straightforward, narrow-minded, New England women who think everything that isn't the truth is a lie! I always hated the plain truth. I liked to trim it up a little.

*Becky* [*with a nervous, pathetic little laugh*]. Like me!

*Rol.* Yes. I remember how we used to laugh at you as a child! Almost the first words you spoke were fibs, and gad, the fairy stories you used to tell about yourself!

*Goes up to table.*

*Becky.* Yes. Do you remember the time, father, after I'd been reading Grimm's Fairy Tales about the wicked step-parents, how I told all over Baltimore you were my stepfather and beat me? It made me a real heroine, to the other children, and I loved it! And you found it out, and gave me my choice of being punished or promising never to tell another story! Do you remember?

*Rol.* [*Sits on the arm of the chair and puts his arm about her*]. I could never bear to punish you!

*Becky.* I always made up stories about everything. I didn't see any harm—*then*—

*Rol.* Well, your mother said I'd proved I couldn't tell the truth! She didn't often use plain and ugly words, but she called me a liar, and I've never heard the word since without hearing her voice and seeing her face as she said it!

*Becky.* You loved her! Oh, I know how it must have hurt!

*Rol.* She wouldn't believe me, she wouldn't forgive, and she left me! I don't blame her; it was my own fault at bottom! But it's true as land and water, Becky, as true as you're my daughter, God help you, and that I've loved you in my useless, selfish old way, I *was true to your mother.* I loved her, and no other woman existed for me then. I was willing to own up I had broken my word and was a gambler! I was willing to own up I was a liar, even, and perhaps I deserved all I got, but I loved your mother, and when she went back on me and believed the one thing about me that wasn't true, I gritted my teeth like a damn fool and said, "To hell with women and to the dogs for me!"

*Becky.* And it wasn't true! Father! I believe you, it wasn't true!

*Rol.* No, but it was true enough soon after! I kept my word to myself and gave her plenty of reasons not to love me afterwards—and that was the beginning of the end of me.

*Becky.* But if you'd only waited, if you'd only given her a chance, wouldn't she have realized?

*Rol.* [*going to her, puts his hand on her shoulder*]. Yes, and that's why you must go back to Tom to-night. Do you want to repeat your mother's and my story? Go back, Becky!

*Becky.* I can't.

*Rol.* Well, I can tell you what Tom'll do if you put off going back to him till it's too late. He'll let you go, and help you to divorce him, so he can marry some other woman, your opposite, and be happy the rest of his life.

*Becky.* Father!

Becky *shows a new element, jealousy, added to her trouble.*

*Rol.* Or else he'll grow hard and bitter about all women, and the gold years of a man's life will be brass in his mouth—thanks to you!

*Becky.* Yes, and I'll live here with you and grow dowdy and slattern, till I'm slovenly all through—body and soul! I won't care how I look or what company I keep in place of the friends who will surely drop me. I'll take up your life here, and my face'll grow flabby and my heart dry and my spirit fogged, and I'll have nobody to thank for the dead end but myself!

*Rol.* But I won't have it! You've got to go back to Tom to-night! You were happy enough with him this afternoon! He's been a wonderful husband to you and I know the run of them! I don't blame him for not wanting me around,—a father-in-law who was a disgrace to his wife. He did right to keep me here where I'm an old story and nobody cares. I'll own up to this now that you want to turn your back on him. But you shan't do it! You shan't break up his home with a beastly scandal and spoil your whole life and perhaps his, all in one hysterical hour! Listen! [*He goes to her and places his two hands on her shoulders.*] It's true that no one was to blame for what I've sunk to but myself. Still, it's also true that in the beginning, perhaps, a great deal of patience, and more forgiveness, might have made both your mother's life and mine a little more worth living!

*He turns aside, surprised by a welling up of an almost forgotten emotion.*

*Becky.* You don't dream how every word you say cuts and saws into me! But I can't go back!

*Rol.* You will. For if it comes down to this point, I won't keep you here!

*Becky.* But I can't go to a hotel! I haven't any money.

*Rol.* I have enough for your ticket, and I'll take you to the station and send a telegram to Tom to expect you in the morning.

*Becky.* No, I can't—I can't.

*Rol.* [*sternly*]. You've *got to!* You can't stay here and I won't give you a cent to stay anywhere else!

*Becky.* You wouldn't turn me out into the streets!

*Rol.* Yes, I will, if I must to force you to go back to your husband.

*He gets her cloak.*

*Becky* [*Rises, desperate*]. Father!

*Rol.* [*struck by her tone, pauses*]. Well?

*Becky* [*Drops her head and with a great effort speaks, her voice sinking almost to a whisper*]. I haven't left Tom—it's Tom's left me—

*A pause.* Roland *stands looking at her and her cloak drops from his hand, as he slowly takes in what she means.*

*Rol.* What do you say?

*Becky.* Tom has left me—now you know why I can't go back.

*Rol.* What for?

*Becky.* He called me what mother called you. He's lost confidence in me. He believes—there's some one else. [*The last in agony of shame and grief.*]

*Rol.* No wonder you made me worm out the truth! I wouldn't have believed it of you, Becky! I wouldn't have believed it of you!

*Becky* [*frightened*]. But it isn't true, father!

*Rol.* Why didn't you tell me the right story in the beginning?

*Becky* [*aghast*]. Father! don't you believe me?

*Rol.* You denied it to him, I suppose?

*Becky.* Of course.

*Rol.* And he turned you out all the same?

*Becky.* He didn't turn me out; he only refused to stay in the house with me. I came away!

*Rol.* Well, if your husband doesn't believe in you, how can you expect me to, who've known all your life you couldn't tell the truth?

*Becky.* Father, I've told you the truth now! For God's sake, believe me, for if *you* won't believe me either, what will become of me?

*Rol.* I can help you better if you'll be honest with me. A man like Tom Warder isn't putting the wife he's been a slave to out of his life without good reason.

*He turns away from her.*

*Becky.* You said you knew the look in my face when I lied, because it was your look. [*Goes to him and stands close, facing him.*] Look in my face now and tell me what you see there. [*She speaks very simply and clearly.*] I love Tom and only Tom and never have loved any other man and have never been anything but faithful and true in my love for him. [Roland *stands silently looking into her face, still unconvinced.*] I stand with Tom exactly, father, where you stood the day mother left you—

*His face begins to change. A knock on the door Left.*

*Mrs. Cres.* [*outside*]. If Mis' Warder wants to catch that train, I hear the car coming!

*Becky* [*breathlessly seizing hold of him with her two hands*]. Father!

*Rol.* Mrs. Warder's changed her mind. She's stopping here to-night.

*Putting his arms about her.*

*Becky.* Father!

*Her tension gives way, and she lies limp in his arms, her slender body shaking with the emotion which now masters her as* THE CURTAIN FALLS.

## ACT IV

Mr. Roland's *rooms in* Mrs. Crespigny's *flat, the following Monday. The sun pours in through the bow-window; folded bedclothes and a pillow are placed neatly on one end of the sofa.* Becky *and* Roland *are having coffee together at the centre-table. The cloth is soiled, other things in the room are in disorder, and everything is decidedly unappetizing.* Roland *is wearing a slovenly bathrobe; a newspaper is propped against the coffee pot before him.*

*Becky.* How horrid and messy everything is!

*Rol.* [*who is smoking a cigarette as he eats*]. Oh, you'll get used to it. Before you know it you'll like things best this way.

*Becky.* Not if I can help it. I shall fight against it.

*Rol.* You think so now; you've only had one day at it.

*Becky.* To begin with, my dear father, you mustn't come to breakfast with me in that disgusting bathrobe.

*Rol.* If you imagine for a minute I'm going to let you come here and upset everything to rob me of my comfort, you'll have your hands full.

Mrs. Crespigny *is heard playing a piano in a farther room through most of the scene. Her repertoire is varied, and consists of an old waltz, a coon song, the* "Melody in F," *and* "Waiting at the Church."

*Becky* [*with an effort at a smile*]. It will be another fight then, father, such as we used to have. Only this time I'm stronger by six years' life with a splendid character, which will help me bring you and myself up to Tom's level, rather than go down with you to this.

*Rol.* [*to change the subject*]. Have you written Tom?

*Becky* [*sighing*]. A hundred letters, I should think.

*Rol.* And no answer?

*Becky.* No, there isn't time.

*Rol.* Yes, he could telegraph.

*Becky.* But I didn't send any of the letters.

*Rol.* [*looking up from his newspaper*]. You aren't eating anything.

*Becky* [*rising in disgust, goes and sits in Morris chair*]. Father, we can't live here, can we? You must tell Mrs. Crespigny, and I'll find a little flat, just for us two—

*Rol.* [*irritably*]. I knew it would come to that! Not satisfied with upsetting Warder's existence and your own, you've got to come here and upset mine! No, sir! I'll marry Mrs. C. before I'll leave here.

*Becky.* That's a threat I know you won't carry out. I've had two long, long nights to think things over. I wish I could die, but I know one can't die when one wants to. I know sorrow, however heartbreaking, doesn't kill,—and I'm so horribly healthy I'll probably live forever. I may even have to stand aside and see Tom happy with some one else. Well, all the same I mean to live exactly as I would if I were still with Tom. I'm going to live as if every day, every hour, I was expecting him back. I'm going to live so that if he ever should come back to me—I will be ready to go home with him.

*The music stops for a moment.*

*Rol.* That's all very well for you, but I don't see why I should have to live a life to please Tom—just so you can leave me in the lurch when he comes back after you. The odds are pretty strong against his wanting me to go home with him too! I've never ridden yet according to his rules, and I don't intend to begin now.

*Goes to far table in the bow-window and takes a fresh cigarette and changes his paper for another.*

*Becky* [*rising, takes the bedclothes from the sofa*]. Don't forget, father, what little money we have is mine, so you'll have to live as I wish. And in the end I believe you'll thank me.

[*She goes into the bedroom*

*Rol.* But in the beginning I'll damn you, and in the end too! I'm too old a leopard to change my spots.

*He makes himself comfortable in the Morris chair.*

*Becky* [*coming out of the bedroom*]. I'm going to try just as hard as I can not to tell even little lies, no matter how small, just to see if I can't get into the habit of always telling the truth. Because he might come back, father, don't you think so? Don't you think maybe he'll come back?

*Rol.* I'm doing my best to make him.

*Becky* [*surprised and eager*]. How?

*Rol.* Never mind how. I'll tell you if it works.

*Becky* [*piling the breakfast dishes on the tray*]. I hoped he'd answer the note I sent by Jenks, but he didn't. No; when Tom says a thing, he means it. I'm going out for a little while.

*She places the tray on the table Left.*

*Rol.* Where?

*Becky.* There's a small empty flat two doors below here; I'm going to look it over. I think it may do for us.

[*She goes into the bedroom*

*Rol.* Don't be gone long, because I might need you.

*Becky* [*in the bedroom*]. For what?

*Rol.* To help receive Tom!

*Becky* [*coming out quickly*]. Father!

*Rol.* Don't get your expectations too high, but I telegraphed him yesterday to come here.

*The piano is heard again, but stops during* Becky's *long speech.*

*Becky.* If he wouldn't come for me, he wouldn't come because you asked him.

*Rol.* I feel if only you could get face to face with him, Becky, especially now when he's had time to think things over, to realize calmly, away from the heat of anger, that whatever your faults might be—

*Becky* [*Interrupts eagerly, going toward him*]. Yes, yes—

*Rol.* Lack of love for him and faithlessness couldn't be among them.

*Becky.* Yes, if I could see him! [*She kneels on the floor beside him, her arms on the arm of the chair.*] I feel that if there's left in the bottom of his heart—no matter how deep down—just a little love for me, if it's only the memory of what he once had, wouldn't my own love be some sort of a magnet to bring his back? If I could sit and talk to him, hold his hand, go back over our life a little, couldn't I make him see that I loved him—and only him, that what I'd done had been foolish—wrong not to do as he wished—but only *that* wrong—and that I've learned something by this terrible lesson? And if I promised to try with all my might and main not to lie any more, if I promised I wouldn't be discouraged with failure if he wouldn't be, but would keep on trying, wouldn't he on his side try to have a little confidence again? Wouldn't he let me come back into his life just for that trial anyway? . . .

*Rol.* I think so. A man like Warder can't get over loving a woman all in a moment, especially if he finds out before it's too late he's misjudged her. Wrong as you may have been, we know you're not so wrong as he thinks.

*Becky.* But he won't come. You see you haven't heard from him—he won't come.

*She goes up to the bow-window and looks out.*

*Rol.* I'm a little worried myself. I told him to telegraph and said it was urgent.

*Becky.* How—urgent?

*Rol.* Well, my dear, as you say, if I had simply said, "Come and see Becky," of course he wouldn't have paid any attention. I had to make the telegram so he would come.

*Becky.* Yes, but how did you?

*Rol.* It was a stroke of genius! I said, "Becky is dying. Come at once!"

*Becky* [*going to the sofa and sitting on it*]. But I'm not dying. He'll find out as soon as he gets here.

*Rol.* No, he mustn't. My idea was that he would think you had tried to kill yourself—don't you see? It would rouse his sympathies—perhaps some remorse—and he would hurry on.

*Dropping the paper carelessly on the floor, he rises.*

*Becky.* But he hasn't!

*Rol.* He couldn't get here till this morning; still, I ought to have had an answer to the telegram.

[*He goes into the bedroom*

*Becky* [*Rises and goes toward the opening*]. And if he should come?

*Rol.* [*coming out of the bedroom in his shirt-sleeves, without the bathrobe*]. Well, you must be careful not to give me away till you are solid with him again. You must be weak and ill—just getting over it—the doctor's saved you! Anyway, I thought that might bring him.

*Becky.* I don't like it.

*Rol.* [*going back into the bedroom, offended*]. I did my best!

*Becky.* But it seems to me as if I would be telling Tom a lie again.

*Rol.* Not at all. I'm telling it. And besides, doesn't the end justify the means?

*Becky.* I think Tom'd call it a lie. I don't want to do it!

*Rol.* Well, if he comes in answer to my telegram, you've *got* to do it!

*Becky.* No, father, I won't!

*Rol.* Nonsense! You can't get out of it. And, good Heavens, why should you, if it's going to give you back what you want and prevent a terrible upheaval?

*The piano is heard again.*

*Becky.* Well, anyway, he hasn't answered, so perhaps he won't come. I'm going out.

*Gets her hat from table Left.*

*Rol.* Don't be long in any case. He might have forgot to send word, or not have time, or even have suspected something and not answered purposely, and be coming all the same on this morning's train!

*Becky* [*putting on her hat*]. I'll see the flat and come straight back. [*She starts to go, stops and turns in the doorway.*] Thank you, father, for trying to help me. If he only *will* come!

[*She goes out Left*

*Rol.* [*lighting another cigarette*]. Move into another flat! To live with everything so filthy clean you can't be easy and let things go! Ta, ta to the bucket-shop, and never a cent to put on anything again! Nothing but cleanth and economy! No, no, Stephen Roland, not at your age. [*He stands gazing at a portrait of* Mrs. Crespigny *on the Right wall, with a half-humorous expression of resignation, then crosses to the electric bell on the Left wall.*] Listen, don't you hear wedding bells? [*He rings the bell.*] Do you hear them, Stephen! [*He rings again. The piano off stage stops.*] Wedding bells! [*He turns and walks toward the portrait again, nodding his head definitely. A knock on the door Left.*] Come in—*Jennie!*

Mrs. Crespigny *comes in*

*Mrs. Cres.* Did you ring?

*Rol.* I believe I did.

*Mrs. Cres.* What's the matter? My piano-playing disturb Mis' Warder?

*Rol.* Oh,—is the pianola mended?

*Mrs. Cres.* Yes. The man said I worked the pedals too emotionally.

*Rol.* I wanted to see you.

*Mrs. Cres.* [*pulling her belt down and her marcel wave out*]. Well, I'm visible!

*Rol.* Mrs. Crespigny, I'm in trouble.

*Mrs. Cres.* [*going to him*]. Now look here, Mr. Roland, true as Gospel I can't let you have another cent, not before the first of the month. Your daughter's here now; you've got to go to her.

*Rol.* Not so fast, please! It isn't money. At least that isn't this moment's trouble. My daughter and her husband have quarrelled.

*Mrs. Cres.* I suspected something was wrong. [*She starts, aghast and angry at a new idea which comes to her.*] *She don't mean to come here and live?*

*Rol.* No, she wants to take me away to live with her.

*Mrs. Cres.* Didn't I always tell you she'd separate us if she could! Now show your character! I guess you're your own boss, ain't you? You won't go, Mr. Roland?

*Rol.* But you see if they don't make up their quarrel, my allowance stops and I won't have a cent. I'll have to live where my daughter wants me.

*Mrs. Cres.* [*taking from the bosom of her shirt-waist a second-hand natural rose with a wired stem, and destitute of green leaves, she twists the wired part nervously about*]. Why ain't one woman's money just as good as another's for you to live on?

*Rol.* Mrs. Crespigny, you've come straight to the point, and you've come pretty bluntly, but that's just as well in view of the poor figure I cut in the matter.

*He turns up toward the centre-table and places on it his newspaper, which he has picked up from the floor.*

*Mrs. Cres.* Why, I think, considering your age, your figger's great!

*Rol.* [*looking at her despairingly*]. I spoke figuratively! Now I'm doing my best to bring about a reconciliation. Of course, if I succeed, I can keep on living here just as usual—I'll have my allowance.

*Mrs. Cres.* But if you don't bring about the reconciliation? . . .

*Rol.* Well, in that case, frankly, I should have to leave you or marry you!

*Mrs. Cres.* [*going to the table*]. Look here, Mr. Roland, I want this in black and white! Are you proposing to me?

*Rol.* Well, Mrs. Crespigny, in a way—

*Mrs. Cres.* But there's a string to it?

*Rol.* You know you have once or twice delicately suggested that a marriage wouldn't be altogether disagreeable to you, but it's a poor bargain for you, and in case the proposal should ever be definitely made, I want to be sure you know what you're getting!

*Mrs. Cres.* I guess I know well enough. I ain't lived in the same flat with you for four solid years without finding out whether or not you was worth it *to me.* I know your faults, Mr. Roland, but they're swell faults.

*Rol.* [*He goes to the table in the window to get a cigarette*]. Mrs. Crespigny, suppose you keep to the point, which is, if I marry—if you marry me, you do it with your eyes open. I'm to have all the liberty I've ever had. None of my habits are to be interfered with, none of my ways of spending money.

*Mrs. Cres.* All right. I know I won't be marrying a hero, but I'll be getting a high-toned name and the company I want for keeps, for if once we're married, your daughter nor nobody else won't sneak you away from me, and you can't get nothing in this world for nothing.

*She sits Right of the table with a lugubrious expression on her poor powdered face.*

*Rol.* Very well, then, [*coming down to her.*] if there's no reconciliation to-day, we'll consider it settled without another word.

*Mrs. Cres.* And if she does make it up with her husband?

*Rol.* We'll let that stand for the present. I would still have my allowance and I wouldn't have to leave the flat.

*Mrs. Cres.* Then, so far as I'm concerned,—and I don't make no bones about saying it,—I'd rather they kep' separate.

*Rol.* Don't be selfish! I think you'll win without that. [*He lifts her head tenderly, smiling sweetly; then, as he turns away from her the sweetness fades, and he looks at least twenty years older.* Mrs. Crespigny, *happy but embarrassed, tears the faded rose to pieces petal by petal.*] I don't understand it. I ought to have had a telegram long ago!

*Mrs. Cres.* [*Starts and rises*]. A telegram! My stars! this telegram came before you was up and I forgot all about it.

*Giving him a telegram.*

*Rol.* That won't do! You'll have to be more thoughtful than that! [*Reading the telegram.*] He's coming! He's due here any minute! And Beck out! Quick! help me make this look like a sick room.

*Mrs. Cres.* A sick room?

*Rol.* I'll put this chair here for Becky to sit in! [*Moving the Morris chair near to the table.*]

*Mrs. Cres.* And I'll put a towel on the table. [*Getting one from the bedroom.*] But why a sick room, Mr. Roland! Who's sick?

*Rol.* That's how I got him here. Telegraphed Becky was dying—and it's worked—he's coming!

*Mrs. Cres.* You ought to have some bottles for medicine!

*Rol.* Bottles? Here's a couple!

*Getting a whiskey bottle and a brandy bottle from the sideboard.*

*Mrs. Cres.* [*taking the bottles from him*]. You don't want him to think she's been on a spree, do you? [*She puts them on the table Left.*] Put a glass of water on the table. [*He gets a glass from the sideboard.*] And I'll put this saucer and spoon on top—that'll look like homeopathic stuff. [*She places a saucer on the table and breathes on the spoon and polishes it on a corner of table-cloth.* Roland *gets a pillow and a blanket from the bedroom and arranges them in the Morris chair.*] Do you know what we ought to have on that table? An orange on a plate! I don't know why it is, but it always looks like sick folks, having an orange on a plate by 'em! Wait a minute. I've got a marble orange just like real. I'll get it. I'll take the tray. [Mrs. Crespigny *with the tray at the door Left.*] Josephine! Josephine! Oh, never mind if your hands are in the suds! [Roland *gets a hassock, which he places in front of the Morris chair. He pulls down the window-shades, takes the siphon, and fills the glass on the table, putting the saucer and spoon on top of it.* Mrs. Crespigny *enters with an imitation orange on a plate.*] Here it is! And I brought a knife with it—don't it look natural?

*The front bell rings.*

*Rol.* Becky!

*Mrs. Cres.* No—I let her take the key!

*Rol.* Maybe it's he! And Becky not back! Don't let Josephine open the door yet!

*Mrs. Cres.* [*Opens the Left door and calls*]. Josephine! Josy! I'll tend door; you go on with your washing!

*She shuts the door.*

*Rol.* Show him here—

*Mrs. Cres.* Huh, huh?

*Rol.* And I'll tell him the doctor's with Becky—

*Mrs. Cres.* Huh, huh?

*Rol.* Then you watch for her, and when she comes, knock on the door and tell me the doctor's gone—

*Mrs. Cres.* [*doubtfully*]. Huh, huh—

*Rol.* Then I'll go "to find out if she feels able to see him," and bring her in as if from her bedroom.

*He goes to the Morris chair and arranges the pillow and blanket.*

*Mrs. Cres.* It's lucky I don't have to tell him all that! You know, I haven't got your—*imagination!* . . .

*Rol.* That's all right—you'll see,—they'll be reconciled!

*Gets a fan from behind the book-rack on the back wall and puts it on the table.*

*Mrs. Cres.* Reconciled!

*Rol.* Yes, yes, they'll be reconciled!

*Mrs. Cres.* *Our* marriage is as good as off then!

*Rol.* Yes, yes—I mean we'll see! [*The front bell rings again.*] Don't keep him waiting—he might get suspicious!

*Mrs. Cres.* [*turning the matter over in her mind, speaks very abstractedly*]. Our marriage is as good as off then!

[*She goes out slowly, weighing this sudden complication in her affairs*

*Rol.* Well, you never know your luck! No, no, don't close the door! I'll be here, expecting him.

*Mrs. Cres.* [*off stage*]. How do you do? Won't you come right in?

WARDER *enters*

*Rol.* So you've come, Tom?

*Ward.* [*very serious*]. How is she, father?

*Rol.* The doctor is with her now. Mrs. Crespigny will let me know when he's gone. I haven't let her know I telegraphed you.

*Ward.* But will she get well? Is she no worse?

*Rol.* We have every hope of her getting well.

*Ward.* [*He turns aside to control a sudden flood of emotion*]. Thank God!

*Rol.* I think a good deal now depends upon you. [WARDER *faces* ROLAND. ROLAND *goes to him.*] Are you ready to take my daughter back?

*Ward.* [*very quietly, soberly*]. Yes.

*Rol.* For good?

*Ward.* If I can only feel sure Becky will try—only *try*—to be straightforward and honest with me, that's all I ask. God knows what I've suffered these two days, and when your message came—oh, to have that on my shoulders too—it would have been more than a man could bear!

*Rol.* Whatever Becky's faults may have been, you did her one terrible injustice!

*Ward.* Yes, I know that now! Becky,—never! Father, hour after hour since the one in which I left her, I've paced up and down my room, or sat and gritted my teeth in the train, and thought—and thought—and *thought*—till the anger died out of me and I began to see things white and clear both ahead and behind me. And all the time Becky's final words kept ringing in my ears, and they rang *true:* "I love you, and only you, and you always." . . . And the further away from the excitement and anger I got, the saner I grew. And as I passed over our life together, second by second of happiness, I found only proof after proof of her love for me! Yes, I did Becky one great injustice, and I want to ask her to forgive me.

*Rol.* [*his better self moved. Takes* TOM'S *hand*]. Tom—

*Ward.* After all, life is made up of compromises and concessions, and if Becky will only try, and let me help her—

*Rol.* I believe you love her still?

*Ward.* I can only answer you by saying that I want more than anything else in the world to believe in her again—to have at least the beginning of confidence.

*With a knock on the door,* MRS. CRESPIGNY *comes in, frightened at what she is going to do.* ROLAND *hesitates one moment, but his old habit soon reasserts itself.*

*Rol.* The doctor gone? [MRS. CRESPIGNY *nods her head.*] Excuse me.

[*He hurries out Left*

MRS. CRESPIGNY *stands looking after* ROLAND, *evidently trying to nerve herself up to the task of telling* WARDER *the truth. She makes several ineffectual gasping efforts to speak, and finally gets started, rushing her words and not daring to speak slowly for fear she'd stop.*

*Mrs. Cres.* I'm going to do something awful, and I only hope I won't be punished for it all the rest of my life. Lord knows, seems as if I'd been punished enough in advance. Can I trust you?

*Ward.* In what way?

*Mrs. Cres.* As a gentleman. If I tell you something—something that you ought to know—will you promise to see it through and not let on I told you?

*Ward.* I don't know if I can promise that. Is it anything you have a right to tell me?

*Mrs Cres.* [*going toward him*]. It won't do you no harm to pertect me, and I give you my sacred word of honor it's the truth instead of the lie you've been told! And all I ask is that you'll pertect me as regards Mr. Roland.

*Ward.* [*astounded, bewildered, but his suspicions rearroused*]. What lie? Go on. I give you the promise!

*Mrs. Cres.* [*whispers*]. She ain't sick!

*Ward.* Who?

*Mrs. Cres.* Mis' Warder! She ain't been sick—that was all a story to get you here!

*Ward.* [*catching her two hands by the wrists and holding them tight, so she can't get away from him*]. No! don't say that!

*Mrs. Cres.* Ssh! I will say it! It's true! The doctor wasn't here when you came! Mis' Warder was out and only came in when I knocked on the door just now!

*Ward.* Do you realize what you're saying?

*Mrs. Cres.* Perfeckly!

*Ward.* And you're telling me the truth?

*Mrs. Cres.* Keep your eyes open and judge for yourself, that's all! Maybe you think *that's* the truth! [*Snatching up the imitation orange from the table, she smashes it on the floor.* Warder *moves to go; she stands in front of the door to stop him.*]

*Ward.* Let me go! I won't stay for this brutal farce!

*Mrs. Cres.* You promised to pertect me, and if you go now Mr. Roland'll catch on, and I want him to marry me! Now you know—

*Ward.* Was this his idea or hers?

*Mrs. Cres.* His, and she—

*Listens.*

*Ward.* [*eagerly*]. She what—

*Mrs. Cres.* [*moving away from the door*]. Ssh! they're here!

Warder *controls himself and goes to the other side of the room.* Roland *comes, bringing* Becky, *who leans on him. Her eyes are down.* Warder *stands immovable and watches*

*Rol.* [*pointedly*]. Thank you, Mrs. Crespigny.

*She goes out unwillingly.* Becky *looks up and sees* Warder. *He stands motionless, watching her.*

*Becky* [*as she meets* Warder's *eyes, breaks away from* Roland]. No, father! I can't do it! I won't do it!

*Rol.* [*frightened*]. Becky!

*Becky.* No! I tell you it's only another lie and a revolting one!

*Rol.* You're ill! You don't know what you're saying!

*Becky.* No, I'm not ill, and you know it, and I haven't been! And if I can't win his love back by the truth, I'll never be able to keep it, so what's the use of getting it back at all?

*The tears fill her eyes and her throat.*

*Ward.* Becky!

*He wants to go to her, but still holds himself back. His face shows his joy, but neither* Becky *nor* Roland *see this.*

*Becky* [*Continues after a moment, pathetically*]. I thought I might creep back, through pity, first into your life, and then into your heart again. But, after all, I can't do it. [*She sits in the Morris chair, hopelessly.*] Something's happened to me in these two days—even if I tell lies, I've learned to loathe them and be afraid of them, and all the rest of my life I'll try—

*Ward.* [*in a choked voice*]. Thank God!

*He goes to her, almost in tears himself.*

Roland *looks at* Warder, *and realizes what it means; a smile comes over his own face, and at the same time his eyes fill with his almost-forgotten tears.*

*Becky.* You can't forgive me!

*Ward.* We don't love people because they are perfect.

*He takes her two trembling hands in his, and she rises.*

*Becky.* Tom!

*Ward.* We love them because they are themselves.

*And he takes her in his arms close to him, as the final*

CURTAIN FALLS.

Study of the plays by Ibsen and Clyde Fitch leads naturally to the study of twentieth century drama in England, America, France, Germany, Spain, Italy, Scandinavia, and Russia. To-day drama is international: a notable play is produced in translation in all of these countries within a short time after its original appearance. Frequently, even, a play is presented in its original tongue by a company traveling to foreign lands. Intelligent theatre attendance supplemented by wide reading of printed plays has come to be an established factor in a liberal education.

After twenty-five hundred years it is apparent that the circle is closing around again to the ideal of the Greeks, who held that drama was not a mere pastime, but one of the noblest educational influences in the life of a nation. In no field of endeavor in the twentieth century is progress more evidenced than in that of the drama. Literature and the fine arts have combined with the mechanic arts and the magic of science to advance dramatic productions through experiment and achievement into new beauty. Even the churches, which since the days of the Puritans have frowned upon the theatre as one of the works of the devil in this wicked world, are lifting the ban; and are often, indeed, themselves utilizing pageants and plays for religious and moral instruction, just as they did long ago in the Middle Ages.

As more plays are printed, and more are produced, especially through the efforts of the Little Theatres, public taste is being educated to appreciate fine drama. Any sincere expression of truth is given a hearing. Vulgarity and lack of distinction are no longer condoned. The public itself is censoring bad plays from the stage.

The fate of the drama lies in the hands of the audiences of the next decade. Now that high school and college students are becoming familiar with the possibilities, and learning to differentiate the true from the sham, they will know how the theatre may become a leavening influence, morally and intellectually; and will feel responsible for throwing the weight of their sanction and patronage to the best things, and discarding as waste of time the inferior. It is to the educated young people of to-day that drama must look for its progress and fulfilment.

## READING LIST

*Hernani*, Victor Hugo
*Ruy Blas*, Victor Hugo
*Chatterton*, Alfred de Vigny
*Richelieu*, Bulwer-Lytton
*Money*, Bulwer-Lytton
*Virginius*, Sheridan Knowles
*Blackeyed Susan*, Douglas Jerrold
*The Rent Day*, Douglas Jerrold
*London Assurance*, Dion Boucicault
*Colleen Bawn*, Dion Boucicault
*The Shaughraun*, Dion Boucicault
*Caste*, Tom W. Robertson
*Our American Cousin*, Tom Taylor
*Manfred*, Byron
*The Cenci*, Shelley
*Strafford*, Browning
*In A Balcony*, Browning
*Becket*, Tennyson
*The Foresters*, Tennyson
*The Son-in-law of M. Poirier* (*Le Gendre de M. Poirier*), Emile Augier and Jules Sandeau
*The Ladies' Battle* (*Le Bataille des Dames*), Eugène Scribe and Gabriel Legouvé
*Perrichon's Journey* (*Le Voyage de M. Perrichon*), Eugène Labiche
*A Scrap of Paper* (*Les Pattes de Mouche*), Victorien Sardou
*Madame Sans Gêne*, Victorien Sardou
*Brand*, Ibsen
*Peer Gynt*, Ibsen
*Pillars of Society*, Ibsen
*A Doll's House*, Ibsen
*The Master Builder*, Ibsen
*The Wild Duck*, Ibsen
*The Contrast*, Royall Tyler
*André*, William Dunlap
*Brutus, or the Fall of Tarquin*, John Howard Payne
*Charles the Second, or the Merry Monarch*, John Howard Payne
*Fashion*, Anna Cora Mowatt
*Rip Van Winkle*, Joseph Jefferson
*Uncle Tom's Cabin*, dramatized by G. L. Aiken (1852)
*Francesca da Rimini*, George Henry Baker
*The Old Homestead*, Denman Thompson
*Shore Acres*, James A. Herne

*Hearts of Oak*, James A. Herne
*Margaret Fleming*, James A. Herne
*Shenandoah*, Bronson Howard
*Secret Service*, William Gillette
*Beau Brummel*, Clyde Fitch
*Nathan Hale*, Clyde Fitch
*The Moth and the Flame*, Clyde Fitch
*Barbara Frietchie*, Clyde Fitch
*Captain Jinks of the Horse Marines*, Clyde Fitch
*The Girl with the Green Eyes*, Clyde Fitch
*The Stubbornness of Geraldine*, Clyde Fitch
*The Climbers*, Clyde Fitch
*The City*, Clyde Fitch

See also: A Reading List in Contemporary Drama, Appendix I.

## TOPICS

The Opening Night of *Hernani:* The Battle of the Critics
The Theatre in England during the Early Nineteenth Century (See: Dickens' *Sketches by Boz* and *Great Expectations*, Chapter 31)
The Effect on Dramatic Technique of the Curtain at the End of Acts
Sarcey's Theory of the *Scene à faire*
Booth Tarkington's Treatment of the Theme of *The Lady of Lyons* in *Monsieur Beaucaire* (dramatized)
The Closet Drama
Early American Drama
Sidney Grundy's Adaptations from the French
Franz Grillparzer: Austria's Greatest Dramatic Poet
Aleksandr Pushkin's *Boris Godunov*
The Comic Operas of Gilbert and Sullivan
The "Star" System
Dion Boucicault in America
Actor-Managers and Their Effect on Drama (For example: David Garrick, Sir Henry Irving, Sir Herbert Beerbohm-Tree, Richard Mansfield)
Great Actors and Actresses of the Nineteenth Century (For example: Mrs. Siddons, Edmund Kean, Helen Faucit (Lady Martin), William Macready, Sir Johnston Forbes-Robertson, Sir Henry Irving, Ellen Terry; Edwin Forrest, Charles and Fanny Kemble, James H. Hackett, Charlotte Cushman, Lawrence Barrett, Augustin Daly, Edwin Booth, Joseph Jefferson, Lester Wallack, Richard Mansfield; Rachel, Constant Coquelin, Sarah Bernhardt; Adelaide Ristori, Tommasso Salvini, Eleanora Duse; Helen Modjeska)
Great Actors and Actresses of To-day
American Theatrical Managers: Augustin Daly, Charles Frohman, David Belasco
The Intellectual Drama of To-day: Ibsen's Influence
The Romantic Drama of To-day: Rostand's Influence
Drama Since the World War
Pulitzer Prize Awards in Contemporary Drama
Current Magazines Devoted to the Theatre
The Work of Eugene O'Neill

(See also Topics at the end of the INTRODUCTION, page 4.)

# APPENDIX I

## A READING LIST IN CONTEMPORARY DRAMA

### ENGLISH

- Baker, Elizabeth
  - _Chains_ (1910)
- Barrie, Sir J. M.
  - _The Little Minister_ (1897)
  - _The Admirable Crichton_ (1903)
  - _Quality Street_ (1903)
  - _Peter Pan_ (1904)
  - _Alice-Sit-By-The-Fire_ (1905)
  - _What Every Woman Knows_ (1908)
  - [1]*_Rosalind_ (1912)
  - *_The Twelve-Pound Look_ (1912)
  - *_The Will_ (1913)
  - *_Der Tag_ (1914)
  - _A Kiss for Cinderella_ (1916)
  - *_The Old Lady Shows Her Medals_ (1917)
  - _Dear Brutus_ (1917)
  - _Mary Rose_ (1920)
- Bennett, Arnold
  - _Milestones_ (1912) (with Edward Knoblock)
  - _The Great Adventure_ (1913)
  - _The Title_ (1918)
- Dane, Clemence (Winifred Ashton)
  - _A Bill of Divorcement_ (1920)
  - _Will Shakespeare_ (1923)
  - _Naboth's Vineyard_ (1926)
- Drinkwater, John
  - *_X=O_ (1917)
  - _Abraham Lincoln_ (1918)
  - _Oliver Cromwell_ (1921)
  - _Mary Stuart_ (1921)
  - _Robert E. Lee_ (1923)
  - _Robert Burns_ (1925)
- Dukes, Ashley
  - _The Man With a Load of Mischief_ (1925)
- Dunsany, Lord
  - *_The Glittering Gate_ (1909)
  - *_The Gods of the Mountain_ (1911)
  - *_King Argimenes_ (1911)
  - *_The Golden Doom_ (1912)
  - *_A Night at an Inn_ (1916)
  - _If_ (1921)
  - *_Plays of Far and Near_ (1923)
  - _The King of Elfland's Daughter_ (1924)
  - _Alexander_ (1925)
- Ervine, St. John
  - _Jane Clegg_ (1914)
  - _John Ferguson_ (1915)
- Galsworthy, John
  - _The Pigeon_ (1902)
  - _The Silver Box_ (1906)
  - _Strife_ (1909)
  - _Justice_ (1910)
  - *_The Little Dream_ (1911)
  - *_The Little Man_ (1913)
  - _The Mob_ (1914)
  - _A Bit O'Love_ (1915)
  - _Loyalties_ (1922)
  - _The Family Man_ (1922)
  - _Windows_ (1923)
  - _The Forest_ (1924)
  - _Old English_ (1924)
  - _The Show_ (1925)
  - _Escape_ (1926)
- Houghton, Stanley
  - _Hindle Wakes_ (1912)
- Housman, Laurence, and Barker, Granville
  - _Prunella_ (1913)
- Jerome, Jerome K.
  - _The Passing of the Third Floor Back_ (1907)
  - _Fanny and the Servant Problem_ (1908)
- Jones, Henry Arthur
  - _The Case of Rebellious Susan_ (1894)
  - _The Liars_ (1897)
  - _The Manoeuvers of Jane_ (1899)
  - _Mary Goes First_ (1913)
  - _Cock o' the Walk_ (1915)
- Masefield, John
  - *_The Tragedy of Nan_ (1908)
  - _The Tragedy of Pompey the Great_ (1910)
  - _The Faithful_ (1915)
  - *_The Locked Chest_ (1916)
  - *_The Sweeps of Ninety-Eight_ (1916)
  - _A King's Daughter_ (1923)
  - _The Trial of Jesus_ (1926)
- Milne, A. A.
  - _Mr. Pim Passes By_ (1921)
  - _The Dover Road_ (1921)
- Munro, C. K.
  - _At Mrs. Beam's_ (1923)
- Noyes, Alfred
  - _Sherwood_ (1910)
- Phillips, Stephen
  - _Paolo and Francesca_ (1899)
  - _Herod_ (1900)
  - _Ulysses_ (1902)
- Pinero, Sir Arthur Wing
  - _The Magistrate_ (1885)
  - _Sweet Lavender_ (1888)

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[1] _One-act plays are starred_

- Pinero, Sir Arthur Wing—*Continued*
  - *The Amazons* (1893)
  - *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray* (1893)
  - *Trelawney of the Wells* (1898)
  - *The Gay Lord Quex* (1899)
  - *The Thunderbolt* (1908)
  - *Mind the Paint Girl* (1912)
  - *The Big Drum* (1915)
  - *The Enchanted Cottage* (1921)
- Shaw, George Bernard
  - *Arms and the Man* (1894)
  - *The Man of Destiny* (1895)
  - *You Never Can Tell* (1896)
  - *The Devil's Disciple* (1897)
  - *Candida* (1897)
  - *Caesar and Cleopatra* (1898)
  - *The Doctor's Dilemma* (1906)
  - *Fanny's First Play* (1911)
  - *Androcles and the Lion* (1913)
  - *Pygmalion* (1913)
  - *Major Barbara* (1915)
  - *Heartbreak House* (1919)
  - *Back to Methuselah* (1922)
  - *Saint Joan* (1923)
- Van Druten, John
  - *Young Woodley* (1926)
- Vane, Sutton
  - *Outward Bound* (1924)
- Wilde, Oscar
  - *Lady Windermere's Fan* (1892)
  - *The Importance of Being Earnest* (1895)
- Zangwill, Israel
  - *Merely Mary Ann* (1893)
  - *The Melting Pot* (1908)
  - *The War God* (1911)

## THE CELTIC DRAMATISTS

- Gregory, Lady Augusta
  - **The Workhouse Ward* (1904)
  - **Spreading the News* (1904)
  - **Hyacinth Halvey* (1906)
  - **The Gaol Gate* (1906)
  - **The Rising of the Moon* (1907)
  - See: *Seven Short Plays* (1909)
  - See: *Irish Folk History Plays* (1912)
  - See: *New Comedies* (1913)
  - **The Dragon* (1920)
  - See: *Three Wonder Plays* (1922)
  - *The Story Brought by Brigit* (1924)
- Robinson, Lennox
  - *The White-headed Boy* (1920)
- Synge, John Millington
  - **Riders to the Sea* (1903)
  - *The Playboy of the Western World* (1907)
- Yeats, William Butler
  - **The Land of Heart's Desire* (1894)
  - **The Countess Cathleen* (1899)
  - **The Hour-Glass* (1903)
- Yeats, William Butler—*Continued*
  - **Deirdre* (1906)
  - **The Shadowy Waters* (1904–1906)

## AMERICAN

- Austin, Mary
  - *The Arrow Maker* (1910)
- Barry, Philip
  - *You and I* (1922)
- Beach, Lewis
  - *The Goose Hangs High* (1923)
- Belasco, David
  - *The Heart of Maryland* (1895)
  - *Madame Butterfly* (1900) (with John Luther Long)
  - *The Darling of the Gods* (1902)
  - *The Music Master* (1904)
  - *The Girl of the Golden West* (1905)
  - *The Return of Peter Grimm* (1911)
- Benrimo, J. Harry, and Hazelton, George
  - *The Yellow Jacket* (1912)
- Benrimo, J. Harry, and Rhodes, Harrison
  - *The Willow Tree* (1917)
- Boker, George Henry
  - *Francesca da Rimini* (1855)
- Bolton, Guy
  - *Chicken Feed* (*Wages for Wives*) (1923)
- Brown, Alice
  - **Joint Owners in Spain* (1914)
  - *Children of Earth* (1915)
  - *Charles Lamb: a Play* (1924)
- Brown, Porter Emerson
  - *The Bad Man* (1920)
- Cohan, George M., and Biggars, Earl
  - *Seven Keys to Baldpate* (1913)
- Connelly, Marc, and Kaufman, George S.
  - *Dulcy* (1921)
  - *To the Ladies* (1922)
  - *Merton of the Movies* (1922)
  - *Beggar on Horseback* (1923)
- Craven, Frank
  - *The First Year* (1920)
- Crothers, Rachel
  - *He and She* (1911)
  - *Nice People* (1921)
  - *Mary the 3d* (1923)
  - *Expressing Willie* (1924)
- Davis, Owen
  - *Icebound* (1922)
- Dodd, Lee Wilson
  - *The Changelings* (1923)
- Emery, Gilbert
  - *The Hero* (1921)
  - *Tarnish* (1923)
- Fitch, Clyde: (See page 625)
- Forbes, James
  - *The Famous Mrs. Fair* (1919)
- Gale, Zona
  - *Miss Lulu Bett* (1920)

GILLETTE, WILLIAM
*Secret Service* (1896)
GLASPELL, SUSAN
**Suppressed Desires* (1915) (with GEORGE CRAM COOK)
**Trifles* (1916)
HAWTHORNE, RUTH, and KENNEDY, MADGE
*Mrs. Partridge Presents* (1924)
HOWARD, BRONSON
*Shenandoah* (1888)
HUGHES, HATCHER
*Hell-Bent for Heaven* (1924)
ISHAM, FREDERICK, and MARCIN, MAX
*Three Live Ghosts* (1920)
JEFFERSON, JOSEPH (with DION BOUCICAULT and others)
*Rip Van Winkle* (1859)
KAUFMAN, GEORGE S.
*The Butter-and-Egg Man* (1926)
KELLY, GEORGE
*The Show-Off* (1923)
*Craig's Wife* (1925)
KENNEDY, CHARLES RANN
*The Winterfeast* (1908)
*The Servant in the House* (1908)
**The Terrible Meek* (1912)
KENYON, CHARLES
*Kindling* (1911)
KLEIN, CHARLES
*The Lion and the Mouse* (1905)
KNOBLOCK, EDWARD
*Kismet* (1911)
*Milestones* (1912) (with ARNOLD BENNETT)
*My Lady's Dress* (1914)
*Marie Odile* (1915)
LAWSON, JOHN HOWARD
*Processional* (1925)
MACKAY, CONSTANCE D'ARCY
**Benjamin Franklin, Journeyman* (1912)
**The Beau of Bath* (1915)
*America Triumphant* (1926)
MACKAYE, PERCY
*The Canterbury Pilgrims* (1903)
*Jeanne d'Arc* (1906)
*The Scarecrow* (1910)
*A Thousand Years Ago* (1913)
*Sanctuary: A Bird Masque* (1914)
*Caliban by the Yellow Sands* (1916)
*The Evergreen Tree: A Masque of Christmas Time* (1917)
*Washington, the Man Who Made Us* (1920)
MARKS, JEANNETTE
**The Merry Merry Cuckoo* (1911)
**A Welsh Honeymoon* (1911)
*The Sun-Chaser* (1916)
MARKS, JOSEPHINE PRESTON PEABODY
**Fortune and Men's Eyes* (1900)
*Marlowe* (1901)
*The Wolf of Gubbio* (1913)
*The Piper* (1919)
MEGRUE, ROI COOPER, and HACKETT, WALTER
*It Pays to Advertise* (1914)
MILLAY, EDNA ST. VINCENT
**Aria da Capo* (1920)
MITCHELL, LANGDON
*The New York Idea* (1906)
MOODY, WILLIAM VAUGHAN
*The Great Divide* (1907)
*The Faith Healer* (1909)
O'NEILL, EUGENE
**Thirst and Other One-Act Plays* (1914)
*Beyond the Horizon* (1918)
**The Moon of the Caribbees and Other One-Act Plays* (1918)
*The Emperor Jones* (1920)
*Anna Christie* (1921)
*The Straw* (1921)
*The Hairy Ape* (1922)
*All God's Chillun Got Wings* (1924)
*Desire Under the Elms* (1925)
*The Great God Brown* (1926)
POLLOCK, CHANNING
*The Fool* (1922)
RICE, ELMER L.
*The Adding Machine* (1923)
RICHMAN, ARTHUR
*Ambush* (1921)
SHELDON, EDWARD
*Salvation Nell* (1908)
*The Nigger* (1909)
*The Boss* (1911)
*Romance* (1913)
SMITH, WINCHELL, and BACON, FRANK
*Lightnin'* (1918)
TARKINGTON, BOOTH
*Monsieur Beaucaire* (1901)
*The Man from Home* (1907) (with HARRY LEON WILSON)
*Your Humble Servant* (1909)
**Beauty and the Jacobin* (1912)
*Seventeen* (1916)
*Mister Antonio* (1916)
*The Country Cousin* (1917) (with JULIAN STREET)
*Clarence* (1919)
**The Ghost Story* (1922)
**The Trysting Place* (1923)
THOMAS, AUGUSTUS
*Arizona* (1899)
*The Witching Hour* (1907)
*As a Man Thinks* (1911)
*The Copperhead* (1917)
TORRENCE, RIDELY
**Granny Maumee* (1917)
**The Rider of Dreams* (1917)
VARESI, GILDA, and BYRNE, DOLLY
*Enter Madame* (1921)
VOLLMER, LULA
*Sun Up* (1923)

- Williams, Jesse Lynch
  - _Why Marry?_ (1917)
  - _Why Not?_ (1922)
- Wolff, Oscar M.
  - *_Where But In America_ (1917)
- Young, Rida Johnson
  - _Little Old New York_ (1920)
  - _Cock o' the Roost_ (1924)

## CONTINENTAL

### French

- Brieux, Eugène
  - _The Red Robe_ (_La Robe Rouge_) (1900)
- France, Anatole
  - *_The Man who Married a Dumb Wife_ (1915)
- Guitry, Sacha
  - _Deburau_ (1918)
  - _Pasteur_ (1919)
- Maeterlinck, Maurice
  - *_The Intruder_ (_L'Instruse_) (1890)
  - *_The Blind_ (_Les Aveugles_) (1890)
  - _Pélléas and Mélisande_ (_Pélléas et Mélisande_) (1892)
  - *_Sister Beatrice_ (_Soeur Béatrice_) (1901)
  - _The Bluebird_ (_L'Oiseau Bleu_) (1911)
- Rostand, Edmond
  - _The Romancers_ (_Les Romanesques_) (1894)
  - _The Far-Away Princess_ (_La Princesse Lointaine_) (1895)
  - _Cyrano de Bergerac_ (1897)
  - _The Eaglet_ (_L'Aiglon_) (1900)
  - _Chanticleer_ (_Chantecler_) (1910)

### German

- Hauptmann, Gerhardt
  - _The Weavers_ (_Die Weber_) (1892)
  - _Hannele's Dream of Heaven_ (_Hanneles Himmelsfahrt_) (1893)
  - _The Sunken Bell_ (_Die Versunkene Glocke_) (1896)
- Sudermann, Hermann
  - _The Vale of Content_ (_Das Glück im Winkel_) (1896)
  - _The Fires of St. John's Eve_ (_Johannisfeuer_) (1900)
- Toller, Ernst
  - _Man and the Masses_ (_Masse Mensch_) (1923)

### Hungarian

- Hofmansthal, Hugo von
  - *_Electra_ (1908)
  - *_Death and the Fool_ (1914)
- Molnar, Ferenc
  - _Liliom_ (1912)
  - _The Swan_ (_Der Schwann_) (1921)
  - _The Guardsman_ (1924)
- Schnitzler, Arthur
  - *_Living Hours_ (_Lebendige Stunden_) (1901)
  - _The Lonely Way_ (_Der Einsame Weg_) (1903)
  - _The Green Cockatoo_ (_Der grüne Kakadu_) (1899)

### Czecho-Slovakian

- Capek, Karel
  - _"R. U. R."_ (1923)
  - _The World We Live In_ [_The Insect Comedy_ or _And So Ad Infinitum_] with Joseph Capek (1923)
  - _The Makroupolis Secret_ (1926)

### Russian

- Andreyev, Leonid
  - _The Life of Man_ (1906)
  - _He Who Gets Slapped_ (1919)
- Gorki, Maxim
  - _The Lower Depths_ (1902)
- Pushkin, Aleksandr
  - _Boris Godunov_ (1825) (trans. by Alfred Hayes, 1918)
- Tchekov, (Chekhov) Anton
  - *_The Boor_ (1890)
  - _Uncle Vanya_ (1902)
  - _The Sea-Gull_ (1896)
  - _The Cherry Orchard_ (1904)
- Tolstoi, Alexis
  - _Czar Feodor Ivannovitch_ (trans. by Alfred Hayes, 1924)

### Scandinavian

- Björnson, Björnstjerne
  - _Mary Queen of Scots_ (_Maria Stuart i Skotland_) (1864)
  - _Beyond Human Power_ (_Over Aevne, I_) (1883)
- Strindberg, August
  - _The Dance of Death_ (1901)
  - _The Dream Play_ (1902)

### Spanish

- Benavente, Jacinto
  - _The Bonds of Interest_ (_Los Intereses Creados_) (1907)
  - _In the Clouds_ (_Por las Nubes_) (1909)
  - _The Prince Who Learned Everything Out Of Books_ (_El Principe que todo lo aprendió en los libros_) (1909)
  - _The School of Princesses_ (_La Escuela de la princesses_) (1910)
- Echegaray, José
  - _The Great Galeoto_ (_The World and His Wife_) (_El Gran Galeoto_) (1881)

### Italian

- d'Annunzio, Gabriele
  - _Francesca da Rimini_ (1901)
  - _The Daughter of Jorio_ (_La Figlia di Jorio_) (1904)
- Benelli, Sem
  - _The Jest_ (_La Cena delle Beffe_) (1909)
- Pirandelli, Luigi
  - _Each in His Own Way_ (_Ciascieno a suo modo_) (1922)
  - _Right You Are!_ (_Così è se vi pare_) (1922)

### East-Indian

- Tagore, Rabindranath
  - *_The Post-Office_ (1914)
  - *_Sacrifice_ (1917)
  - *_The King of the Dark Chamber_ (1914)

# APPENDIX II

## A SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY[1]

### I. ON GENERAL THEORY AND HISTORY OF THE DRAMA

*The Development of the Drama* (1903)—Brander Matthews. Charles Scribner's Sons.

*European Theories of the Drama* (1918)—Barrett H. Clark. D. Appleton & Company.

*The Drama in Europe in Theory and Practice* (1924)—Eleanor F. Jourdain. Henry Holt & Company.

*An Introduction to Drama* (1927)—J. B. Hubbell and J. O. Beaty. The Macmillan Company.

*The Drama: Its Law and Technique* (1898)—Elisabeth Woodbridge. Allyn & Bacon.

*Play-making: A Manual of Craftsmanship* (1912)—William Archer. Small, Maynard, & Company.

*Dramatic Technique* (1919)—George Pierce Baker. Houghton Mifflin Company.

*A Short History of the English Drama* (1921)—Benjamin Brawley. Harcourt, Brace & Company.

### II. ON MODERN DRAMA

*The Theatre of Tomorrow* (1921)—Kenneth MacGowan. Boni & Liveright.

*Tendencies of Modern Drama* (1924)—Arthur E. Morgan. London: Constable & Company.

*The Modern Drama* (1915)—Ludwig Lewisohn. B. W. Huebsch.

*The Changing Drama* (1914)—Archibald Henderson. Henry Holt & Company.

*A Study of the Modern Drama* (1925)—Barrett H. Clark. D. Appleton & Company.

### III. COLLECTIONS

#### A. General

*The Chief European Dramatists* (1916)—Edited by Brander Matthews. Houghton Mifflin Company.

#### B. Modern

*Chief Contemporary Dramatists: First Series* (1915)—Edited by Thomas H. Dickinson. Houghton Mifflin Company.

*Chief Contemporary Dramatists: Second Series* (1921)—Edited by Thomas H. Dickinson. Houghton Mifflin Company.

*Contemporary Plays* (1925)—Edited by Thomas H. Dickinson and Jack R. Crawford. Houghton Mifflin Company.

*OR*

*Representative Plays by American Dramatists* (3 vols.) (1918–21)—Edited by Montrose J. Moses. Little, Brown & Company.

*Representative British Dramas: Victorian and Modern* (1918)—Edited by Montrose J. Moses. Little, Brown & Company.

*Representative Continental Dramas: Revolutionary and Transitional* (1924)—Edited by Montrose J. Moses. Little, Brown & Company.

*Representative American Dramas: National and Local* (1925)—Edited by Montrose J. Moses. Little, Brown & Company.

#### C. English

*Chief British Dramatists Excluding Shakespeare* (1924)—Edited by Brander Matthews and Paul Robert Lieder. Houghton Mifflin Company.

*OR*

*Representative English Plays* (1916)—Edited by John S. P. Tatlock and Robert G. Martin. The Century Company.

### IV. COSTUME

*Costuming a Play* (1925)—Elizabeth B. Grimball. The Century Company.

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[1] This list is suggested as the nucleus of a small library on the drama, as these books are especially helpful.

# APPENDIX III

## ADDITIONAL BIBLIOGRAPHY

### I. COLLECTIONS

(*Arranged chronologically from point of view of the dramatists*)

Perrin, Bernadotte—*Greek Dramas by Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, and Aristophanes* (1900). D. Appleton & Company.

Matthews, Brander—*The Chief European Dramatists* (1916). Houghton Mifflin Company.

Pollard, A. W.—*English Miracle Plays, Moralities, and Interludes* (1898). Oxford University Press.

Fitzgerald, Edward—*Eight Dramas of Calderón* (1906). The Macmillan Company.

Manly, John Matthews—*Specimens of Pre-Shakespearean Drama* (2 vols.) (1897). Ginn & Company.

Cunliffe, John W.—*Early English Classical Tragedies* (1912). Oxford University Press.

Adams, Joseph Quincy—*Chief Pre-Shakespearean Dramas* (1924). Houghton Mifflin Company.

Matthews, Brander, and Lieder, Paul R.—*The Chief British Dramatists Excluding Shakespeare: Twenty-five Plays from the Middle of the Fifteenth Century to the End of the Nineteenth* (1924). Houghton Mifflin Company.

Tatlock, John S. P., and Martin, Robert G.—*Representative English Plays* (1916). The Century Company.

Gayley, Charles Mills—*Representative English Comedies* (3 vols.) (1903–1914). The Macmillan Company.

Fitzgibbon, F. Macaulay—*Famous Elizabethan Plays* (1890). London: W. H. Allen & Company.

Neilson, William A.—*The Chief Elizabethan Dramatists Excluding Shakespeare* (1911). Houghton Mifflin Company.

O'Connor, Joseph—*Great Plays by Marlowe, Jonson, Fletcher, Sheridan, Payne, and Browning* (1900). D. Appleton & Company.

Thayer, William R.—*The Best Elizabethan Plays* (1890). Ginn & Company.

Wheeler, Charles B.—*Six Plays by Contemporaries of Shakespeare* (1915). Oxford University Press.

Donovan, Thomas—*English Historical Plays* (1896). The Macmillan Company.

Matthews, Brander—*Great Plays (French and German)* (1901). D. Appleton & Company.

Williams, William H.—*Specimens of the Elizabethan Drama from Lyly to Shirley (1580–1642)* (1905). Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Evans, Herbert A.—*English Masques* (1897). London: Blackie & Son.

Stevens, David H.—*Types of English Drama, 1660–1780* (1923). Ginn & Company.

Tupper, F., and Tupper, J. W.—*Representative English Dramas from Dryden to Sheridan* (1914). Oxford University Press.

Quinn, Arthur—*Representative American Plays from 1767–1911* (1917). The Century Company.

*Harvard Classics*—Edited by Charles W. Eliot. P. F. Collier & Son.
- *Greek Drama*, Vol. 7.
- *Elizabethan Dramas*, Vols. 46–47.
- *Continental Dramas*, Vol. 26.
- *Modern English Drama*, Vol. 18.

*Belles-Lettres Series of English Plays*—Edited by George Pierce Baker. D. C. Heath & Company.

*Masterpieces of the English Drama*—Edited by Felix E. Schelling. American Book Company.

*Mermaid Series of Old English Dramatists*—Edited by Havelock Ellis. Charles Scribner's Sons.

*Everyman's Library*—Edited by Ernest Rhys. E. P. Dutton & Company.
- *Greek Plays*, Vols. 62, 63, 114, 344, 516.
- *English Plays*, Vols. 381, 153–154, 383, 415, 491–492, 506, 604, 95.
- *German*, Vol. 335.
- *Contemporary*, Vol. 625.
- *Ibsen*, Vols. 494, 716, 659, 729.

### II. GENERAL BIBLIOGRAPHY ON HISTORY OF THE DRAMA

Matthews, Brander—*The Development of the Drama* (in one vol.) (1903). Charles Scribner's Sons.

Mantzius, Karl—*History of Theatrical Art* (6 vols.) (1903–1921). J. B. Lippincott.

Bates, Alfred—*The Drama* (20 vols.) (1903). Smart & Stanley, New York and London.

*Cambridge History of English Literature*, vols. 5 and 6.—Edited by A. W. Ward and A. R. Waller (1907–1917). G. P. Putnam's Sons.

Brawley, Benjamin—*Short History of the English Drama* (1921). Harcourt, Brace & Company.

Archer, William—*The Old Drama and the New (English)* (1923). Small, Maynard & Company.

Quinn, Arthur Hobson—*A History of the American Drama from the Beginning to the Civil War* (1923). Harper & Brothers.

Schelling, Felix E.—*English Drama* (1914). E. P. Dutton & Company.

Thaler, Alwin—*Shakespeare to Sheridan (with illustrations from the Harvard Theatre Collection)* (1922). Harvard University Press.

Watson, Ernest Bradlee—*Sheridan to Robertson* (1926). Harvard University Press.

Thorndike, Ashley H.—*Tragedy* (1908). Houghton Mifflin Company.

Ward, A. W.—*History of English Dramatic Literature to the Death of Queen Anne* (3 vols.) (1875) (revised 1899). The Macmillan Company.

Jourdain, Eleanor—*The Drama in Europe in Theory and Practice* (1924). Henry Holt & Company.

Miller, Nellie B.—*The Living Drama* (1924). The Century Company.

Sharp, R. Farquharson—*A Short History of the English Stage (From Its Beginnings to the Summer of 1908)* (1909). The Walter Scott Publishing Company, London and New York.

Wynne, Arnold—*The Growth of the English Drama* (1922). London: Methuen & Company.

*Drama Study Courses*—Published by The Drama League of America, Chicago, Ill.

*A Catalog of Models and Stage-sets* in the Dramatic Museum of Columbia University (1916).

## III. CLASSIFIED BIBLIOGRAPHY

### A. Greek

Allen, James Turney—*Greek Acting in the Fifth Century* (1916). University of California Press.

Allen, James Turney—*The Greek Theatre of the Fifth Century Before Christ* (1920). University of California Press.

Barnett, Lionel D. *The Greek Tragedy* (1900). London, J. M. Dent & Company.

Butcher, Samuel H.—*Aristotle's Poetics (Aristotle's Theory of Poetic and Fine Art)* (1895). The Macmillan Company.

Campbell, Lewis—*A Guide to Greek Tragedy* (1891). London: Percival & Company.

Campbell, Lewis—*Tragic Drama in Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Shakespeare* (1904). London: Smith, Elder & Company.

Cooper, Lane—*Aristotle on the Art of Poetry* (1913). Ginn & Company (1923, Boston: Marshall Jones).

Courtney, William L.—*The Idea of Tragedy in Ancient and Modern Drama* (1900). A. Constable & Co., Westminster.

Donaldson, John W.—*The Theatre of the Greeks* (1844). (1879, London: G. Bell & Sons).

Flickinger, Roy C.—*The Greek Theatre and Its Drama* (1918). University of Chicago Press.

Haig, Arthur E.—*The Tragic Drama of the Greeks* (1896). Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Haig, Arthur E.—*The Attic Theatre* (1898). Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Mahaffy, J. P.—*History of Classical Greek Literature* (1880) (reprinted 1903) (2 vols.). D. Appleton & Company.

Moulton, Richard G.—*The Ancient Classical Drama* (1890). Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Murray, Gilbert—*A History of Ancient Greek Literature* (1897). D. Appleton & Company.

Murray, Gilbert—*Euripides and His Age* (1913). Henry Holt & Company.

Norwood, Gilbert—*Greek Tragedy* (1920). London: Methuen & Company.

Quinlan, Michael A.—*Poetic Justice in the Drama* (1912). Notre Dame, Indiana: University Press.

Sheppard, John T.—*Greek Tragedy* (1911). *(Cambridge Primer)* Cambridge University Press.

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# APPENDIX IV

## A GUIDE TO PRONUNCIATION

(For key to the symbols used, see *A Guide to Pronunciation* in Webster's New International Dictionary)

Aeschylus (ĕs'kĭ-lŭs) (*in British use,* ēs'-)
Agamemnon (ăg'-*ȧ*-mĕm'-nŏn)
agon (ăg'ōn)
Alcestis (ăl-sĕs'tĭs)
Alchemist, The (ăl'kė-mĭst)
Andria (ăn'drĭ-ȧ)
Andromache (ăn-drŏm'*ȧ*-kė)
Andronicus (ăn'drȯ-nī'kŭs)
Antigone (ăn-tĭg'ȯ-nė)
antistrophe (ăn-tĭs'trȯ-fė)
Arion (*ȧ*-rī'ŏn)
Aristophanes (ăr'ĭs-tŏf'-*ȧ*-nēz)
Aristotle (ăr'ĭs-tŏt''l)
Athaliah (ăth'*ȧ*-lī'*ȧ*)
Aulularia (ô'lū̇-lär'ĭ-*ȧ*)

Bacchae (băk'ē)
Bacchus (băk'*ŭ*s)
Beaumarchais, de (dẽ bō'mär'shĕ')
Beaumont (bō'mŏnt)
Boileau-Despreaux (bwä'lō' dā'prā'-ō')
Boucicault (bo͞o'sė-kō')
Bourgeois Gentilhomme, Le
  (lẽ bo͞or'zhwä' zhän'tē'yȯm')
Bourgogne (bo͞or'gō'ɴ)

Calderón de la Barca (käl'dȧ-rōn' dā lä bär'kä)
Captivi (kăp-tē'vē)
Castelvetro (kä-stĕl-vā'trȯ)
catastrophe (k*ȧ*-tăs'trȯ-fė)
Cervantes (thĕr-vän'tās; *Eng.* sẽr-văn'tēz)
Chapelain (shȧ'plăɴ')
choephori (kō-ĕf'ȯ-rė)
Chrononhotonthologos
  (krō'nŏn-hō'tŏn-thŏl'ȯ-gŏs)
Cid (sĭd)
Clercs de la Basoche (klẽr dė lȧ ba'zȯ'sh')
comedia (kȯ-mā'dyä)
comedias de capa y espada
  (kȯ-mā'dyäs dā kä'pä ē ĕs-pä'thä)
comédie larmoyante
  (kȯ'mā'dē' lȧr'mwȧ'yäɴt')
commedia dell'arte (kȯ-mā-dē'ä dĕl är'tā)
Corneille (kôr'nā'y')
coryphaeus (kŏr'ĭ-fē'*ŭ*s)
cothurnus (kȯ-thûr'n*ŭ*s)
Cyclops (sī'klŏps)
Cymbeline (sĭm'bė-lĭn; -līn)

Demeter (dė-mē'tẽr)
dénouement (dā-no͞o'mäɴ)
deus ex machina (dē'ŭs eks măk'ĭ-n*ȧ*)
deuteragonist (dū'tẽr-ăg'ȯ-nĭst)
Diderot (dēd'rȯ')
Dionysia (dī'ȯ-nĭsh'ĭ-*ȧ*)
Dionysus (dī'ȯ-nī's*ŭ*s)
dithyramb (dĭth'ĭ-rămb; răm)
Don Juan (dŏn jū'*ă*n; *Sp.* dȯn hwän')
drama (drä'm*ȧ*)
dramatis personae (drăm'*a*-tĭs pẽr-sō'nē)
Dumas (du'mä')

Ecclesiazusae (ĕk-klē'-si-ă-zū'sē)
eccyclema (ĕk'sĭ-klē'm*ȧ*)
École des Femmes (ā'kōl' dā fȧm)
Epicoene (ĕp'ĭ-sēn)
epilogue (ĕp'ĭ-lŏg)
Etherege (ĕth'ẽr-ĕj)
Eunuch (ū'n*ŭ*k)
Euripides (ū̇-rĭp'ĭ-dēz)
exodus (ĕk'sȯ-d*ŭ*s)

fabliaux (fȧ'blē'ō')
fabulae Atellanae (fă'bŭ-lē A-tel-än'ē)
façade (f*ȧ*-säd')
Farquhar (fär'kw*ȧ*r)
Fastnachtspiele (fäst-näᴋt-spē'lė)
Freytag (frī'täk)

Goethe, von (fȯn gû'tẽ)
Gorboduc (gôr'bȯ-dŭk)
Götz von Berlichingen
  (gẽts fȯn bĕr'lĭk-ĭng'*e*n)
gracioso (grā'shĭ-ō'sō; *Sp.* grä'thė-ȯ'sō)
guild (gĭld)

Hauton-Timorumenos
  (hô'-tŏn-tĭm-ō-rū'mĕn-ŏs)
Hecuba (hĕk'ū̇-b*ȧ*)
Hecyra (hĕs'ĭ-rȧ)
Hedda Gabler (hĕd'd*ȧ* gä'blẽr)
Hegel (hā'gĕl)
Helena (hĕl'ė-n*ȧ*)
Heracleidæ (hĕr'*ȧ*-klī'dē)
Hernani (ĕr-nä'nė)
Hôtel de Bourgogne (ȯ'tĕl' dā bo͞or'gō'ɴ)
Hôtel du Petit Bourbon (ȯ'tĕl' dü pẽ-tē' bo͞or' bôɴ')
Hroswitha (hrȯs'vė-tä); Roswitha (rȯs'wė-tä)
Hugo (hū'gō; *Fr.* ü'gȯ')

Ion (ī'ŏn)
Iphigenia (ĭf'ĭ-jė-nī'*ȧ*)

Kotzebue, von (fȯn kȯt'sĕ-bo͞o)

L'Avare (lȧ′vär′)
L'Avocat Pathelin (lă′vō′kä′ pȧt′lăɴ′)
Le Malade Imaginaire
(lẽ mȧ′lȧd′ ē′mȧ′zhē′nâr′)
Le Médecin Malgré Lui
(lẽ mā̇′d′săɴ′ mȧl′grā̇′ lwė)
Le Misanthrope (lẽ mė-zäɴ′trŏp′)
Les Femmes Savantes (lā fȧm sȧ′väɴᴛ′)
Les Précieuses Ridicules
(lā prā̇′syĕs′ rė′dė′k*u*l′)
Lope de Rueda (lō′pā dā̇ ro͞o-ā′ᴅȧ)
Lope de Vega Carpio (lō′pā dā̇ vā′gä kär′pyō)
Lysistrata (lī-sĭs′trȧ-tä)

Macready (m*ă*k-rē′dĭ)
Medea (mė-dē′*ȧ*)
mediaeval (mē′dĭ-ē′văl; mĕd′ĭ-)
Menaechmi (mė-nĕk′mė)
Meres (mērz)
Miles Gloriosus (mī′lēz glō′rĭ-ō′sŭs)
mime (mīm)
Molière (mō̇′lyâr′)

Nemesis (nĕm′ė-sĭs)
Neuber (noi′bẽr)

ode (ōd)
Oedipus (ĕd′ĭ-p*ŭ*s) (*in British use*, ē′dĭ-)
orchestra (ôr′kĕs-tr*ȧ*)
Oresteia (ō′rĕs-tē′y*ȧ*; -tī′*ȧ*)
Orestes (ō̇-rĕs′tēz)

pageant (păj′*ĕ*nt; pā′j*ĕ*nt)
parabasis (p*ȧ*-răb′*ȧ*-sĭs)
pastoral (pȧs′tŏr-*a*l)
Peer Gynt (pā′ĕr günt *or* yünt)

Phaedra (fē′dr*ȧ*)
Philemon (fī-lē′mŏn)
Philoctetes (fĭl′ŏk-tē′tēz)
Polyeucte (pō̇′lė-ĕkt′)
Poquelin (pŏk′lăɴ′)
protagonist (prō̇-tăg′ō̇-nĭst)

Racine (rȧ′sēn′)
Richelieu (rē′shẽ-lyû′; *Eng.* rēsh′ẽ-lo͞o′)
Rostand (rŏs′täɴ′)

satire (săt′īr)
satyr (sā′tẽr)
scenario (shā-nä′rĭ-ō; *Eng.* se-nä′ri-ō or se-nā′ri-ō)
Scribe (skrēb)
stichomythia (stĭk′ō̇-mĭth′ĭ-*ȧ*)
strophe (strō′fė)

theatre (thē′*a*-tẽr)
Théâtre (tā̇′ä′tr′)
Thesmophoriazusae (thĕs′mō̇-fō′rĭ-ă-zo͞o′sī)
thymele (thĭm′ė-lē)
trilogy (trĭl′ō̇-jĭ)
tritagonist (trĭ-tăg′ō̇-nĭst; trī-)
Troädes (trō′ä-dēz)
trope (trōp)

Vanbrugh (văn-bro͞o′)
Villiers (vil′ẽrz; ĭ-ẽrz)
Viola (vī′ō̇-l*ȧ*; vė-ō′l*ȧ*)
Volpone (vŏl-pō′nĕ)
Voltaire, de (dẽ vō̇l′târ′)

Weimar (vī′mär)
Wycherley (wĭch′ẽr-lĭ)

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